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Art of fusion

Chinese and Italian artists are presenting a series of new media projects to celebrate the opening of the China Shijitan Contemporary Art Center.



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Tomb hiking

Scattered across the mountains of northwest Beijing are the 13 Tombs of the Ming emperors. Head out for a 6-hour hike that includes scenic views and ancient architecture.

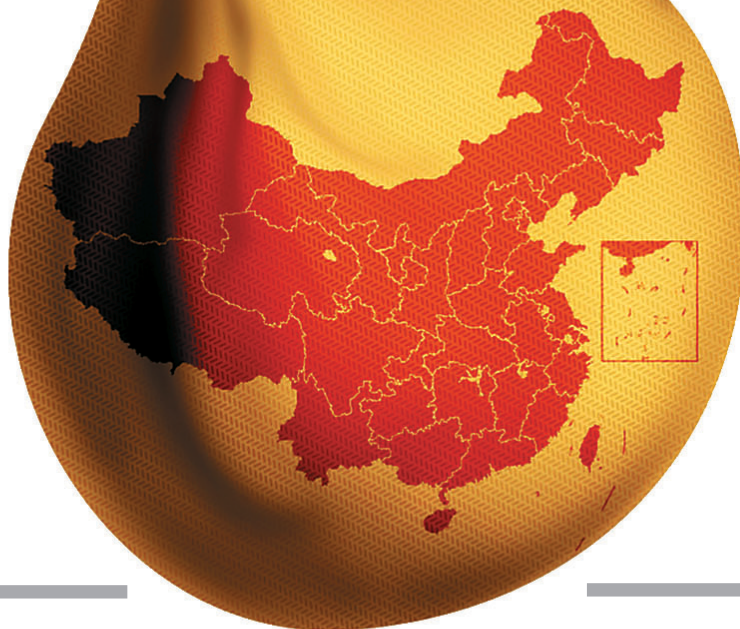
Addicted to the drip

China seems to be in a hurry to do everything: to get rich, to live quick and to get well. Rare is the patient with the patience for pills and rest.

The now ubiquitous intravenous drip, once a last resort when medication and home care had failed, is now being abused as though it can cure the common cold.

Both patients and hospitals seem addicted to the procedure, having used up more than 10.4 billion bottles of fluids in 2009 alone. To put that in context, that is eight bottles per person: the rest of the world never exceeds three bottles.

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City tries to rein in population growth

By Zhao Hongyi

Ten districts of Beijing have pledged to control their population expansion for the next five to 20 years. However, analysts say their goals are conservative and their targets unreachable.

The districts submitted their proposed population numbers in a series of economic development reports for the "12th Five-Year Plan 2011-2015" to the municipal congress this week.

Dongcheng district promised to keep its population below 650,000 for the next 20 years, the business center and diplomatic community Chaoyang district said its population would remain below 4.5 million and the technology park Haidian said it would stay below 3.8 million.

The newly developing residential area Fangshan said 1.1 million and Tongzhou said 1.45 million. Shunyi, where the international airport is located, promised to stay below 870,000, while the nature reserves Huairou and Miyun said 456,000 and 530,000.

Shijingshan, where the Capital Iron & Steel used to be located, pledged a population of fewer than 720,000 people, and Pinggu, the agricultural base and tourist destination, fewer than 454,000.

At the end of June 2010, Beijing's total population was 19.72 million, far higher than the maximum capacity of 17.5 million calculated by scholars and experts, the *Economic Observer* reports.

"This has led to serious problems in food supply, environment protection, traffic jams and property costs," the report says.



At the end of June 2010, Beijing's total population was 19.72 million.

IC Photo

The municipal government called on districts and counties to find ways to curb the population explosion and lay a sound foundation for further sustainable development.

Dongcheng proposed to accelerate its reconstruction of old buildings, and Chaoyang to further develop its status as a business center to disperse its population.

Huairou and Pinggu will continue to develop as nature reserves, while Fangshan and Daxing said they planned to become overflow areas for the downtown population using the new subway lines.

Some districts proposed moving major industries like manufacturing, logistics, business and commerce to Hebei Province in hopes of prompting an exodus.

The Capital Iron & Steel Group already left Shijingshan to Caofeidian, an island in Hebei Province along Bohai Bay. Beijing is

building its second international airport in southeastern Langfang, Hebei.

"Our purpose is not to control the population," said Lu Jiehua, professor from Peking University. "Instead, the government's goal is to better organize and provide more services."

Zhao Heng, a researcher at Beijing Academy of Social Sciences, agreed that developing satellite towns in Hebei Province is important.

"We must build up a population structure like Shanghai's, which offloads labor to its neighboring provinces of Jiangsu and Zhejiang."

"Unfortunately, Beijing does not have an ideal population structure, and it's the time to start doing something about that."

But Zhao was pessimistic about the population cap initiative. "It is too big, grand and wide."

Traffic controls, subways 'obviously' ease gridlock, official says

Traffic congestion has eased "obviously" since authorities launched a string of new, stricter traffic rules and opened five new subway lines last month, a local transportation official said Wednesday.

"On average, the duration of traffic jams has been reduced by more than two hours per day, from 3 hours and 55 minutes before the new year to the current 1 hour and 45 minutes since January 1," said Li Xiaosong, deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Committee of Communications.

Li's committee unveiled an indexing system for the city's traffic congestion. According to the system, 0 to 2 signifies traffic is "smooth," 2 to 4 "generally smooth," 4 to 6 signals "slight congestion," 6 to 8 "moderate congestion," and 8 to 10 "heavy congestion."

"Before the New Year, Beijing's congestion index was usually greater than 8.2, but it has been 6 since January 1," she said.

Li attributed the improvement to new traffic rules and subway lines.

Massive traffic jams have long been a headache for Beijing, a city of 20 million people and 4.8 million vehicles. Last year, an average of 2,000 new cars hit the city's streets every day.

On December 23, authorities in Beijing announced they would slash new car registrations to ease gridlock. This year, the city will allow only 240,000 vehicles to be registered, about a third of the number of last year.

It also prohibited municipal government agencies and public institutions from increasing the size of their vehicle fleets during the next five years.

Other measures include higher parking fees in the city's central areas and



Five new suburban subway lines have opened to ease the city's traffic congestion.

IC Photo

stricter traffic rules for cars registered outside Beijing.

An odd-even license plate system was introduced to prohibit cars from driving in the congested areas during peak hours on alternating days.

Beijing opened five new suburban subway lines on December 30 with a combined length of 108 kilometers, bringing the city's total number of subway lines to 14 and the total length to 336 kilometers.

The city is building more subway lines, Li said.

By 2015, the number of lines in the city is expected to reach 19 with a combined length of 561 kilometers. By 2020, the total subway length would increase to 1,000 kilometers, she said.

"Developing public transport, especially rapid rail transit, is an important move for Beijing to ease traffic congestion and

improve urban functionality," she said.

Li Feng, who lives in Daxing, a suburban district in southern Beijing, told Xinhua Wednesday that he had felt the positive changes in Beijing's traffic.

"I used to drive at a speed of only 20 kilometers per hour when I entered and left the city in the morning and evening rush hours, but now I can drive at 40 kilometers per hour," he said.

Yet many people are waiting to see whether these effects stick given the city's incredible appetite for private cars.

Transportation authorities said Sunday that they had received 215,425 new car license applications after this month's application period closed late Saturday night.

But only a tenth of those applicants will get license plates this month pending a lottery on January 26. (Xinhua)

Snowless winter causing drought, disease

By Chu Meng

Spring Festival is around the corner, but the capital is still awaiting its first snowfall.

Meteorologists said this year's late snowfall broke a previous record set 22 years ago on December 28, 1988.

Guo Wenli, director of the climate center under the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Meteorology, said the city has been suffering a lingering drought for more than a decade, but this year the situation is much worse.

"In my 12 years living here, I don't recall a single year when it didn't snow in some form by January," said Kadi Hughes, a British expat working in Beijing. "My friends down in Hong Kong are planning a trip up here this winter so their kids can see snow. I am unsure what to tell them."

The city has been without rain or snow for nearly two months, and the precipitation during the wet season from June 1 to September 15 was a mere 273 millimeters, the lowest recorded since 1960, Guo said.

Absent access to large rivers, Beijing's water supply depends largely on precipitation and underground water, Guo said.

"Underground sources supply more than two thirds of Beijing's needs. However, since 2004 the city has been drawing on groundwater supplies from below the karst rock layer. That is 1 kilometer or deeper below the surface," he said.

Those deep underground sources, stored in karst, were originally allocated for use only during natural disasters or war.

Dai Yuhua, an official at Beijing Water-affair Authority, lambasted the city's booming ice and snow parks for wasting water.

"Everyone knows that Beijing is in a drought, making it the last place a responsible company should pick to build a golf course. We have had restrictions on these kinds of parks since 2000. But the snow parks are equally poisonous to our water stores," Dai said.

Beijing Water-affair Authority issued regulations on Monday to forbid snow parks from using tap-water, requiring them to use reclaimed water instead. Violators will be fined and forced to close.

This winter, profit-seeking groups opened nine snow parks in the downtown area — more than ever before. The four largest are in Yuanmingyuan Palace, Yuyuantan Park, Longtan Park and Taoranting Park. These together use 60,000 cubic meters of artificial snow made from 30,000 tons of water.

Daily maintenance can push this water usage even higher.

"Without natural snowfall, many people opt to go to these artificial snow parks. That generates a lot of money, which gives people incentive to open even more parks and use up more of our water. Even reclaimed water is very precious to Beijing," Dai said.

Projects to divert water from the country's south will relieve the problem to some extent once the project is completed in 2014. But before then, Beijing will continue tapping its strained underground water supplies.

"However, it is estimated that Beijing is suffering a shortage of 1.79 billion cubic meters of water annually. So the canal will not solve the problem," Dai said.

The dry weather has also caused a resurgence of H1N1 swine flu. Deng Haihua, a spokesman from the Ministry of Health, said Monday that 23 percent of the recent flu cases have been caused by the H1N1 strain.

However, he said he expects fewer infections than in 2009.

Guo also said that winter agriculture had been affected by the drought, and that the coming spring will see more sandstorms.

Jet Li's One Foundation splits from Red Cross becomes public

By Han Manman

One Foundation, established by movie star Jet Li, officially transformed into a public foundation in Shenzhen on Tuesday.

It was the first time a non-governmental foundation broke from its government-run partner to become a public fundraising body.

Experts said the move may usher in a new era for China's private charities and a big step forward in the management and reform of social organizations.

Since its establishment in 2007, One Foundation has operated as a private charitable project attached to the Red Cross Society of China. Consequently, its attempts at independent fundraising have been fraught with legal problems.

Although there are no specific laws or regulations banning civil organizations from being established as public foundations and doing public fundraising activities, most individuals or NGOs can only raise money by drawing on their government connections.

Wang Rupeng, a spokesman for the Red Cross Society of China, said One Foundation raised more than 190 million yuan during the past three years,



Kung fu star Jet Li (second from right) attends a press conference to announce the establishment of Shenzhen One Foundation Public Interest Foundation in Shenzhen.

CFP Photo

140 million yuan of which went to philanthropic projects.

However, Jet Li complained that One Foundation had little say in deciding how to use the money it raised. He wanted the foundation to focus more on supporting grassroots NGOs, which lack both money and professionals: the Red Cross gave everything to disaster relief, Xinhua reported.

Li has been trying to apply to

establish an independent public fundraising foundation and facing the same problems as most Chinese NGOs in doing so, said Wang Zhenyao, chief of Beijing Normal University's One Foundation Community Research Institute.

In recent years, especially after the devastating Wenchuan earthquake in 2008, Chinese NGOs have been developing rapidly in quantity and quality, Wang said, adding

that the government has encouraged their expansion.

The country started a trial project in Shenzhen to advance the reform of the civil affairs system in July 2009, which allowed the city's authorities to approve the creation of public fundraising foundations. In the past, only the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA) had this authority.

Under an agreement between

MCA and the Shenzhen government, One Foundation registered as a public foundation.

The foundation published the names of a five-member board of supervisors, including one Shenzhen government official Tuesday.

"The government has sent a clear signal that creates more opportunities for civil organizations and individuals to take part in philanthropy," Wang said.

Wang said the successful transition of One Foundation may stir activity in China's philanthropy.

"Civil foundations may copy the example of One Foundation that first set up a foundation and then developed it into a formal registered operation," he said.

Ma Hong, director of the Shenzhen NGO administration bureau, said the door to registering public fundraising foundations is open to all NGOs.

However, it does not mean many of them will be approved, she said.

"We have to evaluate them and grant approval only when they meet certain standards," Ma said, adding that credibility and transparency are most important.

Lawyer appeals for the release of 'last hooligan'

By Han Manman

A Beijing lawyer has petitioned the central government to pardon a man known as the country's "last hooligan," who is still serving a prison sentence for a crime that has been abolished for 13 years.

Zhou Ze, a lawyer from Beijing Wentian law firm, submitted his proposal to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and several other government departments on behalf of Niu Yuqiang, 45, who was convicted of hooliganism after stealing a pedestrian's hat and brawling twice in 1983.

At that time, the crime of hooliganism included acts such as brawling, sexual harassment and provocation. However, in 1997 the crime which put Niu behind bars was stricken from the Criminal Law, making Niu an inmate for a non-crime.

Niu, a Beijing resident, was sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve in 1984. He was moved to a prison in Xinjiang to serve this sentence. The



Niu Yuqiang and his family

Photo provided by Legal Mirror

death sentence was commuted to 18 years' imprisonment for good behavior.

Later in October 1990, Niu was released for medical parole and sent back to Beijing to be treated for tuberculosis, Zhu said.

"Several prison officers came to check on Niu's health in 1991 and offered him an additional

year of temporary release, but they never came back or contacted him in any way after that," Zhu said.

In 1997, Niu married and started a family. It was the same year the Criminal Law was revised to eliminate his crime.

But in the summer of 2004, Niu was forced to return to the prison and serve his origi-

nal sentence. Because he violated his medical parole by failing to return to the prison on time, his sentence was extended until 2020.

"It was the police who failed their duties by not checking on Niu every year and taking him back to prison on time," Zhou said, adding that Niu should not be held accountable for parole violation in this case.

Zhou's proposal also suggests that Criminal Law should be amended to allow people like Niu to be released if they have served a sentence longer than the punishments stipulated in the 1997 revision.

According to existing legislation, criminals must follow the old code if they were sentenced prior to the revision.

"It's really unfair to people like Niu," Zhou said.

Niu's story also has been a topic of much debate and sympathy.

"Hooliganism is no longer a crime. Why should Niu still be in prison — especially for such a

small crime," Wang Bo, a local resident, said. "Leaving him in prison is like some kind of sick joke for the legal system and a waste of prison resources."

"The reason people have faith in the law is not because of its severity, but because of its fairness and mercy. Is Niu not deserving both?" said another local resident Chen Zhibin.

The *Beijing Times* said that most legal experts and criminal lawyers regard Zhou's proposal as hopeless.

Ruan Qilin, a professor at the Law School of China University of Political Science and Law, said imprisonment must be based on the law at the time of conviction. Another professor at the university said the only option is for criminals to file an appeal.

"Amending laws (in this way) diminishes the authority of judicial decisions," he said.

Zhou said he might pursue legal action against the prison in Xinjiang that was in charge of Niu's parole if his proposal is rejected.

Asia Art Expo 2011 attracts artists from more countries

By Zhang Dongya

The 3rd Asia Art Expo 2011 opened at the China World Trade Center last Friday. The Chinese sections featured traditional realistic paintings and oil paintings by young professors and teachers at art schools such as the China Central Academy of Fine Arts.

Besides artists from East Asian countries, such as the South Korea and Japan, the Expo also

brought in painters from West and South Asian countries like Jordan and Pakistan.

Fadia Aboudi, a self-taught Jordanian artist, took six pieces of artworks to the Expo. It was her first time showing her paintings on the Chinese mainland. She previously joined several art workshops in Jordan, Taiwan and New York, and has held many exhibitions in India, Uzbekistan,

Qatar and Jerusalem.

"Little art exchange exists between China and West Asia. Aboudi's works feature an abstract style that complements Chinese painting, because China is just starting to explore abstract work," Wen Wu, the curator, said.

Domestic and overseas groups and associations, such as the Europe-China Culture Exchange & Trade Promotion Commission

(EUCNC), also participated in the Expo. A group of 38 artists from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan displayed their works at the Expo.

There is no specific data on trade volume, but the curator said the results for this year were average.

"The performance is due to the diverse styles and schools of painting exhibited. Since more

institutes and organizations joined, the outstanding works we planned to emphasize were overshadowed," Wen said.

On the opening day, more than 10,000 people visited the exhibitions. The following three days drew 5,000 visitors each.

"We hope the Expo can encourage more people to explore art galleries and exhibition halls to enjoy newly created art," he said.

IV abuse a symptom of ailing health industry

By Li Zhixin

China's people and hospitals are addicted to intravenous medication.

In 2009 alone, the country used some 10.4 billion bottles of fluids, or about eight bottles per person. To put that in perspective, the rest of the world rarely averages between 2.5 to 3 bottles per person.

The shocking figures were disclosed by Zhu Zhixin, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission, at a meeting to reform the country's medical and health care system for 2011.

Hospitals as pushers

"Everybody knows you can recover quickly if you get intravenous medicine."

Tang Xiao, a 29-year-old public relations manager, caught a cold over the New Year's holiday. She was running a mild fever of 38.9 C.

In order to make sure she could return to work immediately after the holiday, she went to the hospital and asked the doctor to prescribe intravenous medication.

"I've always tended to get sick since I was a kid. In the past, I've never been able to recover from medicine and rest alone," she said. When she gets sick, she goes to the doctor to get an IV drip.

"Everybody knows you can recover quickly if you get intravenous medicine," she said.

Unlike Tang, 37-year-old Wang Yi, a middle school teacher, takes the exact opposite approach. When she or a family member falls ill, they try medicine first and injections second. An IV drip is the last resort.

So when her 5-year-old son was diagnosed with bronchitis last week, it was with great hesitation that she took her doctor's advice. The doctor insisted on administering an IV antibiotic, and became impatient with her when she said she would prefer pills.

"My son was not that sick. He didn't need intravenous medicine. I'm sure he would have recovered quickly by taking medicine as directed and getting a good rest," she said.

The doctor said pills were slow, and asked her if she would be willing to risk letting her son get pneumonia because of the slow treatment.

In the end, she acquiesced.



Antibiotic abuse is even more pervasive in pediatrics.



Ignorance of basic medicine and desire for a quick cure are two of the main reasons patients abuse IV medication.

CFP Photos

Abuse a social problem

In the consultation room at People's Hospital of Peking University, a large green poster reads "Intravenous medicine does not guarantee faster recovery."

The political slogan is mostly an unwanted decoration.

Patients awaiting their IV drips gathered beneath the sign on January 2.

"In truth, probably 70 percent of them didn't need IV medication. Pills and good rest would have been enough," said Yang Xia, the doctor on duty.

When Yang was a child, few people demanded IV medication. Most doctors would only prescribe

injections or a drip for a persistent fever with no sign of recovery.

"In the late 1980s, patients usually got an injection in the butt for serious ailments. Today, people get an IV drip so casually that you would think they're getting a bag full of Coca Cola," she said.

"Medically, intravenous injection is invasive to the human body. Adverse reactions have ranged as high as 80 percent in recent years," she said.

In drug therapy, the side effects of oral medicine are comparatively mild as they have to pass through the digestive system before entering the bloodstream. With

intravenous medicine, the risk of a reaction is immediate and serious.

"Actually, we frequently try to persuade those patients

who don't really need IV medicine to take an oral treatment. Most don't listen to us," Yang said.

"Actually, we frequently try to persuade those patients who don't really need IV medicine to take an oral treatment. Most don't listen to us."

Explaining the popularity

"Doctors who don't suggest an IV drip are seen as unprofessional or irresponsible. In order to protect themselves, most doctors just follow whatever their patients tell them to do."

Ignorance of basic medicine and the desire for a quick cure are two of the main reasons people habitually abuse IV medication.

Yang said doctors in the US tell parents to give their children more water and make them rest. When they catch a cold, doctors might prescribe medicine to help lower a fever — but that's it.

"In China, parents would be furious if a doctor did so little since they have to invest so much time waiting in line. Doctors who don't suggest an IV drip are seen as unprofessional or irresponsi-

ble. In order to protect themselves, most doctors just follow whatever their patients tell them to do," Yang said.

The abuse may also be driven by interests on the doctors' side, said Huang Jianshi, assistant dean of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences.

"Some doctors and medical institutions deliberately prescribe transfusion treatments to boost their performance ranking and earn more. Their income is directly related to how much medication and fluid they prescribe to patients," Huang said.

System reform needed

But the unsound medical system is the root of this problem, Huang said.

Due to the current compensation mechanism employed at medical institutions, the idea that hospitals and doctors should be medicine peddlers has become ingrained in the minds of the Chinese public.

By selling IV medication and providing the drip hookup, hospitals can earn more money than they can by selling pills. Many doctors exaggerate the efficacy of these medications to push them on patients as the best solution.

"The key to controlling the abuse at hospitals is to ... cut off the benefits shared by medical institutions and the prescribing doctors," he said. "Doctors' salaries and bonuses should be only linked to how many patients they treat — not how many prescriptions they write."

He said health officials should

In many Western countries, fewer than 10 percent of patients use IV medication: in China, it is the dominant form used in 60 to 70 percent of treatments.

The problem of antibiotic abuse is even more pervasive in pediatrics. Yang Yonghong, the vice president of Beijing Children's Hospital, said one third of the hospital's 10,000 daily patients receive IV medication.

A study of children at hospitals in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan and Chongqing in 2009 found that Chinese children used two to eight times as many IV medications as foreign children.

also require hospitals to maintain detailed records of how many IV medications are prescribed. "Those doctors who are writing the most prescriptions should be investigated and asked for an explanation," he said.

"Under the current system, doctors still play a key role in eliminating transfusion abuse. If the administration and hospitals can supervise doctors' prescriptions and encourage them to exercise self-discipline, abuse can still be controlled," he said.

The public too has a lot to learn about basic medicine.

This Monday, Deng Haihua, spokesman for the Ministry of Health, said at a press conference that the ministry plans to urge hospitals to strengthen their internal management and promised to push for hospital and medical system reform.

Coupon generation

Americans are not the only ones who are able to find the best deals. In a country that's become one of the largest luxury and consumer markets in the world, young consumers have found some innovative and wacky ways to spend their money.

Discount shopping becomes a way of life for young Chinese



Consumers print out discount coupons at a row of terminals in Wangfujing. Fan Jiashan/IC Photo

Known as the "coupon generation," young shoppers have brought a surprising shift in shopping habits, the Associated Press reported.

Ding Can, a 32-year-old software testing engineer, carries a purse crammed with more than 30 discount cards and dozens of coupons. Her apartment is packed with freebies, from cosmetic samples to key chains. She often lines up before dawn for discounted

movie tickets.

Ding's zest for savings isn't out of necessity. She is relatively well off. "I've never come across a good deal I didn't like."

Companies as global as Nike and as local as the Yonghe fast food chain are courting the bargain hunters.

A planned three-week campaign by Mercedes-Benz for its two-seat Smart car ended in a day when the more than 200 cars were snapped up in less

than four hours at about 135,000 yuan, a 20 percent discount, on the country's most popular online retailer.

More than a craze, discount shopping is becoming a way of life for young Chinese. It's a relatively new and youth-oriented phenomenon in China, where consumerism has taken off only as the country has shifted from central planning to a market economy and started to grow.

(Agencies)

The third eye

New shopping habits to change business model

By Huang Daohen

The shift in young people's shopping behavior will have a significant impact on the way business is done in the country, said Wen Yijun, market analyst with Oriental Securities in Beijing.

According to a report by the investment bank Goldman Sachs, there are currently about 350 million people in China between the ages of 18 and 35. The group's consumption ability is crucial to future development as the government transforms its export-oriented economy to one more domestic focused.

The report predicts that the young group will help the country overtake the US as the world's largest consumer market as early as 2020.

Wen said the spending habits of this group have therefore become especially important for entrepreneurs. Among the recent shifts, consumers' appetite for discount coupons and online shopping is particularly noteworthy.

While malls and department stores remain big shopping sites, Wen said they are losing favor among young shoppers. Companies should focus on

offering discounts and options for online group purchases.

Velo is a Beijing-based company that has coupon booths around subway stations and the city's shopping centers.

Each day the company hands out about 200,000 coupons for restaurants, goods and other services.

"Now young people are more aware of managing their finances. They will calculate and think more before buying," Wen said. The coupons and discounts make them feel they can get more for less.

Wen said the recent price surge has somehow prompted the new shopping habits. "Though discount stores are usually on the outskirts of the city, young people feel it's worth the drive," he said.

But Wen believes this coupon obsession is not necessarily all about saving a buck. "It has become fashionable, as young people can share their experiences."

Wen said it's not bad business for stores to offer discounts. Coupons are actually a form of advertisement: it encourages consumers to spend more.

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Branching out

Wenzhou opens door for foreign-bound private capital

By Huang Daohen

They have been known for producing poor quality shoes and blamed for pushing up housing prices. Yet, the image of investors from Wenzhou, the coastal bastion of the economic engine in Zhejiang Province, is about to change.

The city has started a pilot program to allow local individuals to speed up offshore investments, and its 1 trillion yuan in the private sector may help to offset the flow of hot money and cool surging inflation.

Limited opportunity

The traffic on Monday morning is the worst of the week. Numerous Mercedes-Benz, BMWs or Ferraris form an angry mob around pockets of taxis on jam-packed roads.

The music on the radio is the sound of honking, angry drivers.

Still, behind the stopped wheels, well-dressed entrepreneurs are already conducting business on their cell phones.

This is Wenzhou, a medium-sized coastal city in Zhejiang Province, home of a people called "the Jews of the Orient" – a city of self-made millionaires.

Jin Jijun, a Wenzhou entrepreneur, was among the trapped drivers in his BMW. He was on his way to meet a French business partner.

Jin, in his 40s, used to be a real estate investor. He's recently found a new market to gamble on: fine wines. He had invested in art, stocks and real estate, but after the government tightened the property industry, Jin turned to the profitable wine industry.

"Especially French wines," Jin said. "This market is relatively new in Wenzhou – really everywhere in China – and has the most potential."

Recent years have seen the price surge in the wine industry. The price of Chateau Lafite Rothschild and other popular brands is rising every month in China. The price is pushing ever higher with Spring Festival around the corner.

"I have no idea where all these Chinese buyers have come from, but the price of some vintage wines has increased 30 percent this year," Jin said.

Jin traveled to Bordeaux three times last year and bought hundreds of bottles of Chateau Lafite Rothschild. However, one thing still bothered Jin: as an individual, he cannot invest directly in France.

Wealthy individuals in Wenzhou like Jin have often run up against this problem. Since they are prohibited from directly investing abroad, many chose to seek high returns within the country. They pumped their money into real estate, coal mines and vegetables.

According to the city's commercial authorities, by July 2009, individuals from the city's Pingyang County alone had invested 3 billion yuan in more than 100 Shanxi Province coal mines.

Encouraging investment abroad

But there is something to



Wenzhou businessmen are known for their business sense. IC Photos
Illustrated by Jiao Shu

celebrate. The city government announced on January 7 that it has launched a pilot program to allow residents to make direct overseas investment (DOI).

According to a post on the official website of the Wenzhou Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, adults in Wenzhou will be able to invest up to \$3 million in any single overseas investment with a maximum of \$200 million per year.

A group of individuals will only be allowed to buy \$10 million worth of foreign exchange

in a single offshore investment. However, offshore investments in the stock markets, real estate or the energy and mining sectors are prohibited.

Under the new rules, individual investors can own, control or manage foreign companies by setting up entities, buying shares or initiating mergers and acquisitions.

That's what wine vendor Jin is expecting. "We are all ready and poised for take-off," Jin said. He is now planning to bid for a French vineyard.

Zhou Dewen, head of the Council of Wenzhou Small and Medium-sized Enterprises' Development, said the move will be a great for local entrepreneurs.

Zhou said it's common for a wealthy Wenzhou entrepreneur to invest in South Africa under the name of a relative. While the investor may be able to make a fortune, bringing that money back into China is difficult since it went through illegal channels.

These changes would give such investors a legal door, Zhou said.

Analyst

Plan strikes at inflation, hot money

Market analysts say the new move by Wenzhou could significantly boost foreign investment by local private investors, but Zhao Xiao, economics professor with the University of Science and Technology Beijing, thinks it's a crafty way to cool national inflation.

Zhao said the government plans to run a tighter monetary policy this year as the country still faces inflation pressure. Last November, the consumer price index (CPI) struck a historic high of 5.1 percent.

Private capital being used for speculation was largely responsible for the jump, Zhao said.

This policy that allows indi-

viduals to directly buy assets overseas opens a new channel to disperse the excess liquidity in the market, Zhao said.

But Zhao said he believes the new move won't necessarily have an immediate effect on outbound local private capital. Private capital usually seeks high returns, and returns on domestic investments are currently much higher.

"That is why hot money keeps pouring in from around the globe," Zhao said. The professor also said that the move will play down hot money fears.

Despite no evidence of large-scale hot money inflows, there has long been a huge demand for foreign investment in coastal cities

like Wenzhou.

"In fact, private investors have been investing overseas for years, but through underground or illegal channels," Zhao said.

Official figures from the city's government show that Wenzhou natives had established around 600 offshore companies at the end of 2009. Private capital in the city is estimated to be about 40 billion yuan.

Others believe that estimate is conservative, and that the real numbers could top 1 trillion yuan.

The move to create a legal channel for outbound investment will in turn help the government better monitor and manage money inflow, Zhao said.

Fujifilm crosses into cosmetics market

By Chu Meng

Fujifilm China Investment, the Japan-based photographic and imaging company, said it plans to launch a high-end cosmetics line in China to tap what it regards to be the world's biggest market.

"Astalift," Fuji's first cosmetics line, had its initial release conference in Shanghai on Monday. China is the first overseas market for the Astalift brand due to the country's tremendous growth potential, said Fuji China president Takashi Yokota.

Fujifilm, a unit of Fujifilm Holdings Corporation, decided to move into cosmetics because it anticipated the market for camera film will shrink as consumers shift to digital cameras. Entering the Chinese cosmetics market is part of a plan to diversify its business territories after transferring out from the fading traditional consumer film industry.

With its own research and development force, Fujifilm China, rival to American competitor Kodak, opened a trial online store on Taobao.com as early as last September. Its products include liquid soap, facial lotion, make-up remover and essence, priced between 240 and 770 yuan.

However, sales records have shown weak performance.

President Yokota promised to enhance promotion efforts this year and open 50 direct chain stores or counters. Fujifilm has also opened a direct-management online store, catering to the huge number of young Chinese online shoppers under Fujifilm's official website.

China is not Fujifilm's first test field for cosmetics. In 2006, Fujifilm introduced its Astalift product line to the Japanese market. So far it has 4,000 chain counters in Japan.

Cosmetic product development has a lot in common with film development, Yoshisada Nakamura, senior research manager at Fujifilm, said at the press conference.

He explained that "one of the most popular and important cosmetic substances, collagen, is one of Fujifilm's essential ingredients in film production. We actually have 70 years of experience producing collagen, and that knowledge ensures the maturity of our end products."

Xiao Shen, a professor from the Economic School of Peking University, said that while Fujifilm has transferred is camera business from film to digital, it is looking to make its main profits in Medical and Life Science Systems, Graphic Systems, Engineering Photo-finish Products and Motion Picture Films.

"Whether it can pose a threat to conventional Japanese cosmetics manufactures such as Shiseido, Kanebo and Kose is unknown, because they all have had a solid market share in China for years," he said.

Disneyland a cultural threat?

By Wang Yu

The construction of Shanghai Disneyland starts this May. As the second Disneyland in China, the project has maintained national attention since 2009, when rumors of a contract first surfaced.

Although construction won't be finished until 2015, the park has already been turned into a symbol of Western cultural invasion.

As the symbol of Chinese animated figures – this country's version of Mickey Mouse – Sun Wukong (the Monkey King) will play a big part in the new Disneyland. "Let Sun Wukong and Mickey Mouse dance together," said Don Robinson, former managing director of Hong Kong Disney. But these words scare some Chinese culture experts, who fear their national treasure will get lost in the mix.

Some worry stems from the success of Chinese characters in Hollywood movies. Some viewers did not like their national treasures being given English voices in films like *Kung Fu Panda*.

On the other hand, local cartoons and animated pictures have failed to gain popularity among Chinese viewers.

Shanghai Disneyland developers are using Tokyo Disneyland as an example, which opened in 1983 and has become



Many consider the Disney version of Monkey King a cultural invasion. CFP Photo

Disney's most profitable overseas branch. More than 260 million tickets have been sold so far, and it's done wonders bringing Disney products to Japan.

Other than the culture issue, the financial future of Shanghai Disneyland is also controversial.

Xinmin Evening News reported that the government has invested more than 65 billion yuan on the project, with no

guarantee of profit. Paris Disneyland, for example, began earning a profit only in 2008, 16 years after its opening. The Hong Kong branch has also lost money the past three years.

Disney, on the other hand, can still earn money by charging royalties and a managing fee, so it is only the local government that has to endure the financial pressure.

Comment

Create a fusion

A single Disneyland can't threaten our culture. It's a good opportunity to create a fusion, a Chinese-style Disneyland. Kids like Mickey Mouse because the company promotes the character in a smart way. Sun Wukong won't lose if our cartoon industry is on the right track.

– He Yuxin,
newspaper editor

A warning sign

Sun Wukong is the equivalent of Mickey Mouse in the US. The character is a very precious resource to the native cartoon industry. When our traditional culture needs to first be modified by foreigners and introduced back to our kids, it's lost. But in a free market, you can't forbid others from using your heritage. We don't have to be afraid of that but we need to be aware of it.

– Zheng Fuhan, office worker

Nothing to be afraid of

In the UK, American pop culture is also powerful but young people still like native indie culture. There is a Disneyland in Paris but French people remain French all the same. It is only a park. There is nothing to be afraid of.

– David Reynolds,
soccer coach from Britain

University student works as professional nude model to pay tuition

By Chu Meng

Su Zizi (stage name), a second-year student at Renmin University, is the first high-profile case of a student posing nude in order to pay her tuition. She receives 500 yuan per session.

Su's most recent gig was getting photographed while swimming nude inside a large aquarium in one of Beijing's most crowded grocery markets last Thursday. Afterwards she accepted all interviews. Reporters were in thick down jackets while Su was in nothing, sitting calmly in front of mics and cameras.

"The theme was to explore our fear of suffocation," she said. She appeared more relaxed than the reporters.

Her story was brought to public attention last December when she was displayed at the Renmin University of China Xu Beihong Art School, the top painting academic institution in China.

The self-sponsored "Who am I?" art exhibition opened quietly, displaying photographs of her body.

Quickly, school officials removed some of the photos, and many students were shocked by this kind of "audacity." Even her mother believed that her daughter was "crazy."

Su said she became a model out of economic necessity, but gradually fell in love with the art of body photography.

"Artistic body photography isn't immoral in other countries, it's just rare in China and less socially accepted," she told *Sina* last week.

Su, an art major, was born in Yichang City, Hubei Province in 1991. Her parents divorced when she was young and she grew up under the care of her paternal grandparents under tight economic conditions. She was a rather rebellious girl who smoked, used ketamine and got into fights.

Some say she is great for being able to support herself. Others say her art is a step away from pornography.



Su Zizi (left) has brought the nude model industry under the spotlight.

IC Photo

Comment

Should not be front-page news

I don't see the point of the story. In Britain this wouldn't be news at all, much less front-page news.

Like other types of models, such as auto models, fashion models, TV models and art models, an artistic body model is just a job. It could be part-time or full-time.

Her academic background works to her advantage. Men like smart beauties rather than dull beauty pageant types.

Things can change if she, like certain Playboy models, aims to promote herself by using her university status as a selling point rather than saying she's doing this purely for the sake of art.

– Clinton Krikken, *The Bookworm* employee

Tasteful

First I thought this was just another extravagant story played up by online media. But when I found her work, I thought she brought sincerity to her art.

Though the pictures aren't perfect and far from outstanding artistic achievements, they are still one-of-a-kind in our current society.

The fame of China's artistic universities and academic institutions are fading. Some have degraded into the last choice for students who take the university exam.

Su is one of a few who is still in love with art and doing something seriously for it.

– Lin Mingjie, news analyst,
Xinmin Evening News

Healthy modeling career is needed

If she's a sex worker in Paris, she would be under legal protection. If she's a successful model in New York, she would make a huge amount of money. Why? Because there are well-established industries there for sex and modeling.

In China, fashion modeling isn't well formed, much less body modeling.

In other countries, nude models are not uncommon and are well accepted among artistic universities and institutions. Maybe Su can be among the first to introduce the practice to China.

– Cathy Sheng,
project manager of
British Council Beijing

Luxury retailers take their wares online

By Annie Wei

In the last two years, a dozen websites have launched business-to-consumer sales of luxury brands. Behind the booming scene, it's too early to tell who will be the winner.

The mushrooming of e-luxury websites

Steven Chen, a 33-year-old investor, just purchased a Miu Miu bag online for his girlfriend. "I would prefer some special designer brand, less tacky, but I was too busy to fly to Hong Kong or Paris this Christmas."

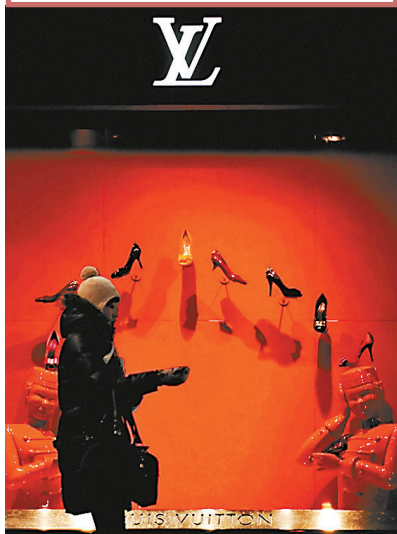
"Online shopping is convenient," he said. "Plus, there are discounts."

There is an increasing number of people like Chen. According to Shangpin.com, a local e-luxury website where Chen shops, brands like Gucci, Fendi and Armani were almost sold out before Christmas. The website said more than 30 percent of orders were for more than one product and 10 percent of orders totaled at least 30,000 yuan, with some higher than 100,000 yuan.

According to market research from Goldman Sachs, 80 percent of luxury consumers in China are younger than 45, while the percentage for consumers under that age is only 30 percent in the US and 19 percent in Japan.

The report said China spent \$6.5 billion (43 billion yuan) on luxury goods in 2010; the number of Chinese who spend on luxury goods will increase from 40 million to 160 million within the next five years, and the country is expected to become the biggest luxury consumer in the world.

As a result, an increasing number of luxury brands have been searching for more distribution channels to boost their sales. So far, a dozen websites claim to have "luxury products," like Vipshop.com, Yintai.com, 5lux.com, Glamour-sales.com.cn, Wooha.cn, and Ystyle.com. Western companies like Yoox, a leading luxury online retailer from Italy, entered the market by launching emporioarmani.cn last November.



Outside an LV boutique
Hong Yi/CFP Photo



As China's luxury market booms, brands that entered the market long ago, like Dior and Luis Vuitton, have become widely known and seen their sales increase.

CFP Photo

Not real luxury

Although "e-luxury" is a fancy name, one can get bored quickly after browsing these sites. Yintai, for example, is one of the leading department store chains nationwide, but its so-called luxury website is nothing more than a shopping catalogue for its malls. Unlike Western department stores, whose catalogues are well designed with known models, the Yintai catalogue is average at best. Another

— Vipshop.com — hardly sells anything with global reputations, only brands from factories in South China.

According to Zero2ipo Research Center's report on e-luxury sites, China's current e-luxury websites cannot adequately provide customers the real experience of shopping for luxury products.

Instead of selling luxury brands, most websites sell

"known brands." Glamour-sales.com.cn, for example, carries brands like Lacoste and Juicy Couture.

"Premium products are hard to sell online," said Bedi Ye, founder of Fashion Trend Digest, a website that focuses on the fashion and luxury industry.

He said that what makes online shopping attractive is the discounts.

Successful foreign websites

like Net-a-porter.com generate annual revenues of \$250 million to \$400 million, with good sales of designer brands. However, if Net-a-porter opened a similar website in China, the business might not do as well because the number of Chinese consumers who know the names of these designers is very small, and the number of customers who know and can afford these brands are even smaller, Ye said.

Out-of-date inventories

Zhang Yanan, an analyst at Zero2ipo Research Center, said there were some obvious obstacles for e-luxury in China. First, how will it ensure product diversity? And how will it lower costs? Most Chinese e-luxury products are purchased by overseas buyers or online. More than 60 percent of these websites' inventories are out of date, Zhang said.

Xiao Hui, a local buyer and owner of the boutique Soma at Nali Patio, said online products are cheaper, but few are in

season. "If you are a fashionista, you don't want to spend money on 2010 spring and summer collections right now, unless it was a special limited-edition or something classic," Xiao said. He pointed out that limited-edition products might sell at stores abroad or in Hong Kong as opposed to online, since the boutiques there have tight connections with VIP customers.

The most known websites like Yoox.com, Shangpin.com and Glamour-sales.com.cn all sell out-of-season products.

However, Yoox.com blurred the ideas of "out-of-season" and "discount" by using good brands at lower prices, said Ye, founder of Fashion Trend Digest. "It's like shopping at outlets when we are abroad," he said.

Another obstacle is that many websites have suspicious sources for their products.

Meici.com, for example, showcases many international brands from Italy, the US and France on its website and claims its inventories are on the Chinese mainland and that customers will

get their orders within two to five days. But "generally speaking," Ye said, "luxury brands are very strict with their distribution channels. It's hard to imagine a small website can get so many dealerships."

Zhang said currently many e-luxury websites use the same purchasing channels, so many online products look the same.

And "although many sites ask for VIP membership and only members can log in," Zhang said, "one won't find the same type of attentive service online as he or she would in a store."

The market is there

Although the e-luxury market seems to be unsteady in China, many sites have nonetheless announced their plans to further develop this area.

Shangpin.com, a local site, said it is the exclusive dealer for brands like Van Cleef & Arpels and Mont Blanc. In January, it plans to introduce fragrance from brands like Burberry, Lanvin, Loewe, Prada, Paul Smith and Ver-

sace, as well as expand into suitcases, leather goods, home and furniture, watches, jewelry and lingerie.

Zhao Shicheng, CEO of Shangpin.com, said that the idea of shopping for luxury goods online will become more and more accepted in China, which will only increase the competition between online retailers.

Federico Marchetti,

founder and CEO of Yoox, said e-luxury is a long-term business in China. Ten years ago, when Marchetti started his e-luxury business in Italy, many people thought it was a joke. For his company's future in this country, he said, "We estimated that China would become the third biggest market for us by 2015." Marchetti said the company's priority is not making money

but improving the quality of e-luxury business.

By launching its first site in November, the company has set up a logistic center in Shanghai and developed a Chinese site catering to Chinese consumers. Marchetti said Yoox focuses on quality service, and that it will be rewarded in the long run.

It remains to be seen whether his assessment proves correct.

Hopkins professor views Sino-US relations in context of public opinion

By Liang Meilan

Many Sino-US experts have kept close watch over how public opinion influences the relationship between the world's two most powerful nations.

A forum called "The Current State of Sino-US Relations in the Context of Public Opinion" was held Sunday at Capital M restaurant, with two prestigious Sino-US scholars presenting their views.

David M. Lampton, director of China Studies at Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University, was one of the presenters. His latest book is *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds*.

Aside from researching China's military, economy and politics, Lampton pays close attention to the US' media coverage of China.

Lampton said print media is a major platform influencing American opinion and influencing Sino-US relations.



David M. Lampton (left) offers insight into the influence of media and public opinion on Sino-US relations. Photo by Wei Jianghui

He said that print media in the US has gotten better in terms of quality and profundity of stories on China.

"The American representatives of media in China no longer have language difficulties, and China has become more and more open in providing more access for foreign media like

Wall Street Journal, *New York Times* and *Financial Times* to not only cover news but also solicit opinions," he said.

In broadcast media, a prevailing trend is programs are becoming more and more entertaining and shorter, which is considered a threat to the quality of TV or radio programs

about China.

"They will look for too many dramatic and action-filled programs, resulting in a lack of in-depth programming," he said.

"Another fact is that we have too many 24-hour news channels in competition for viewers. They live on [sensationalism]. Thus, in a broad sense, their quality of programming about China is dumbed down," he said.

Many experts see the Internet as a dangerous place for breeding negative public opinions. Though Lampton agrees somewhat, he showed optimism.

"Thanks to the Internet and ever-improving social network websites, we can learn more about people's view on China in 2010 and 2011 than we could in the 1970s," he said.

Lampton said most US media reports about China are objective and fact-based.

He gave an example of a story in the *Wall Street Journal* three months ago about how General Motors harvests a tremendous profit in its

business in China, and how it buys back shares from the federal government to escape government control.

"In short, the story is about the Chinese market generating revenue for American companies to survive," Lampton said. "Some aspects of US-China relations are still under the radar."

Lampton said that though public opinion think tanks are lacking in China, public opinion assessment happens all the time behind the scenes.

"The system is essential for the government to figure out what the trends are," he said.

Lampton said that China is skilled in its polling methods, and PR companies have a firm grasp of consumer demographics.

"Some of the more interesting studies are about the emerging middle class," he said.

"I believe that Western people will learn more about Chinese public opinion as studies become more and more transparent."

Chinese-Japanese youngsters share Coming-of-Age Day together

By Chu Meng

Two hundred Japanese and Chinese 20-year-olds, dressed in traditional kimonos and qipao, attended the annual Coming-of-Age Day ceremony held by the Japanese embassy in Beijing at 798 Art Zone on Tuesday.

Coming-of-Age Day is a Japanese festival held annually on the second Monday of January in the past year to encourage all those who have turned 20, the age of majority in Japan.

It was the first time the celebration was held in China and shared with Chinese students.

"We are allowed to drink alcohol, smoke and vote at the age of 20, becoming a more effective citizen in Japan," said Yoshiki Masada, the president of Beijing Japanese Students Association, co-sponsor of the ceremony.

The association is an organization established in Beijing in 2000. It aims to spread awareness of traditional Japanese culture and make connections with Chinese students on campus who share this common interest.

"Bringing Japanese traditional festivals to China is good for deepening understanding between youngsters from the two countries," Japanese ambassador to China Uichiro Niwa, who assumed office in Beijing last July, said at the ceremony.



Japanese 20-year-olds dress up in Kimonos to celebrate Coming-of-Age Day.

Photo by Koichi Kamoshida/CFP

"I am very glad to see that more and more sharing and exchange projects are being held among young people. In recent years, the two countries have created a conducive environment for the development of bilateral ties in cul-

tural areas," he said.

During the ceremony, students presented Japanese and Chinese traditional performances and shared "Coming-of-Age Day sake."

Wang Qiong, a Chinese student from the International

Relations School of Peking University, said that although she has been legally an adult for two years (the age is 18 in China), sharing in this Japanese festival was a great experience for her.

"It makes me aware of

differences and similarities between the two countries and has taught me something new about Japanese culture," she said. "Though the two countries have disputes now and then, I made good Japanese friends today."

Get ready for a night of Scottish dancing



Group Scottish dancing at the St. Andrew's Ball

Photo provided by Beijing Caledonian Society

By Liang Meilan

Tuesday evening, the main room on the third floor of the Athletic Center in the Capital Mansion complex was filled with some 40 people, both Chinese and expats, joyfully dancing in groups to Scottish bagpipe music.

They were practicing their steps for the upcoming Burns' Supper Night, a traditional Scottish festival in memory of the late Robert Burns, Scotland's favorite "ploughman poet."

Prior to the Burns' Supper, which will be held on January 22 at the China World Hotel Beijing, participants are asked to attend two practice sessions held on the last two Tuesdays before the event date.

"Because Scottish folk dance has various patterns and requires smooth cooperation among group dancers, rehearsals are needed for attendees who are mainly amateur dancers," said John Hector, chief

of Beijing Caledonian Society, the event organizer.

The Burns' Supper is one of two major annual events the society brings to stage. The other is the St. Andrew's Ball, which happened November 27. It featured John Stuart Band, pipe performances and a mass Scottish dance performance.

The society presents a broad spectrum of Scottish folk dancing, and choreographs some special moves for each of its annual events.

Another practice will be this coming Tuesday and is open to all and free of charge. "As a dance society, we are trying to make every event an easily accessible opportunity for both Chinese and expats to know more about Scottish dance and music culture," Hector said.

The practices are free because tickets to the Burns' Supper – 650 yuan – may be too expensive for many. Those who attend practice

are able to learn jigs and reels – two characteristic Scottish dance patterns – and network with others.

The main steps at the dance this year will be Postie's Jig, Ladies Fance and Dashing White Sergeant. The dress code at the Burns' Supper is formal wear or traditional dress: kilts for men and long skirts for women.

Besides the annual events, the society organizes monthly dance outings that normally begin in February. "Through these informal dance gatherings, we are trying to attract as many Chinese people as possible to join the society and dance," Hector said.

In addition, the society runs three Ceilidhs (Scottish term for an evening of music and dancing) a year, mainly targeted at families.

"To teach children Scottish dancing, we have functions at many international schools like the German School in Beijing," Hector said.

The society accepts members with no experience in Scottish dance. It usually takes three to five classes for beginners to master the basic steps.

Membership to the society is 100 yuan for a year. So far, the society has 80 members.

High heels are not recommended while dancing because of the amount of ankle movement that is required. New members should wear flat and comfortable shoes.

Tickets for the Burns' Supper can be reserved by emailing beijingcaledoniansociety@gmail.com.

Beijing Caledonian Society free dance practice

Where: 3/F, Capital Club Athletic Center, Capital Mansion, 6 Xinyuan Nanlu Chaoyang District

When: January 18, 7:30-9 pm

Email:

beijingcaledoniansociety@gmail.com

Cost: Free

Event

Clothing drive

Rotaract Beijing, an expat volunteer organization, is holding its second annual clothing drive. Used – but not used-up – shirts, coats, quilts, shoes, toys and books will be accepted. The charity store Roundabout will distribute them to people in need throughout China.

Collection points: Nearby the Tree, Frank's Place, Stadium Dog, Tim's Texas BBQ, the Familier, Hutong School, Grinders and Paddy O'Shea's

When: January 10-30, 8-10 am

Website:

rotaractbeijing.org

Learn to clean and steam live hairy crabs

Hairy crabs are now in season. The Fig Tree, a pastry and cooking school, is holding a class for people to try their hand at cleaning and steaming crabs with roe. Afterwards, a crab meal with rice and vegetables will be provided.

Where: The Fig Tree, Room 202, Building A, Chaowai Soho, Chaoyangmen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: January 14, 7-9:30 pm

Tel: 13910566742

Cost: 200 yuan

Broadway English theater camp

Beijing Playhouse has been running annual summer and winter camps designed for non-native English speakers. This year's winter camp is now holding auditions for children ages 6 to 15.

Where: No 4 Middle School, 2 Huangchenggen Bei Jie, Xicheng District

Auditions: January 15, 2 pm

Tel: 13718908922

Cost: 5,500 yuan

(By Liang Meilan)

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Traveling with your pets



Obtaining proof of your pet's vaccination history and health is necessary before you can take it on a train or plane.

Peng Tong/CFP Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

Spring Festival is a time when many locals leave the cold and commotion of Beijing. It's an ideal time to travel to tropical destinations like Hainan or to chilly Harbin to see the international ice festival.

But if you have pets at home, what can you do? Our suggestion: take them with you!

Be sure to get the necessary vaccination and health certificates.

If you are leaving the country, consult the embassy at your country of arrival to check whether you need any other documents. Make all the necessary preparations before handing your pet off to anyone else.

Here are some crucial preparations you should make:

- Pets must have had a rabies vaccination at least 30 days in advance. Vaccination and health certificates, plus a sterilization certificate of your pet carriage, are required for boarding airplanes.

Chaoyang District Veterinary Station

Where: 13 Building, Nongxing Nan Li, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6735 8970

- Find your local district's animal quarantine center, hand in the necessary documents and apply for an animal health certificate prior to your departure.

Chaoyang Animal Quarantine Center

Where: 8 Bei San Tiao, Tuanjihu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 8582 2404

Haidian Animal Quarantine

Center

Where: Dongxinyuan Compound, Dongbeiwang, Haidian District

Tel: 8270 8303, 6296 7245

- Go to the municipal animal quarantine administration for an animal transportation permit, which is necessary whether you're traveling by air or train.

Beijing Animal Health Inspection Institute

Where: A3, Shangyuancun, Xizhimenwai, Haidian District
Tel: 6225 5752

- Make sure you have purchased a seat or space for your pet. Foreign airlines and China Eastern Airlines provide very good services for transporting animals.

China Eastern Airlines

Where: Civil Aviation Building, 15, West Chang'an Avenue, Xicheng District
Tel: 6601 7755

Beijing Railway Station

Tel: 6512 8931, 6563 4452

- Obviously you'll need a pet carriage. It should be new and has to be clean.

Freight Terminal, Capital International Airport

Where: Capital International Airport

Tel: 6458 6645 / 6646

Golden Sun Air Freight Express

Where: Room 1012, China Tower, Capital International Airport

Tel: 6456 5724 / 5714

Your pet carriage should be laid with papers or other materials that can absorb urine and excrement. For long trips, make sure your vessel is equipped with a dispenser for water and food. In cold weather, it may be good to cover the carriage to protect your pet from the cold.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

I tried a Bachata dance class last weekend and I'm sort of in love with the dance. Where can I find quality instruction around Liangmaqiao?

Check out Phoenix Dance Company located at Room 1701, Building 4, 15 Zhenzhi Jie, Maizidian, Chaoyang District. It is now providing a beginners Bachata course every Friday from 8 to 9:30 pm. Taught by international professional instructors, the class is conducted in both Chinese and English. This class is a drop-in class, so no partner is required. Visit phoenix-dance.com for more information.

I designed a silver necklace that I want to make as a present for my sister's birthday. It is very detailed and cannot be made by a machine. Is there a customized silver workshop somewhere in town?

Story of Silver may help you out. You can find it at Qijiyuan Diplomatic Residence Compound, 9 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. Customized silver jewelry can be handmade by skillful craftsman using fine silver wire. They can work on any level of fineness of silver including the most popular, sterling (925) silver. Contact them at 13391710089.

(By Liang Meilan)

Think inside the geek box, join the club

By Liang Meilan

For technology geeks, the key factor to success is thinking outside the box. But that doesn't mean isolating oneself from the world. Communicating with like-minded people can greatly increase the chances of finding creative ideas and generating unexpected results, as well as getting to know like-minded people, even potential partners.

Networking – online or in the real world – has real value. This is especially true in China, where a technology boom has spawned creative technology professionals and independent startup consultants. They've already formed popular and dynamic "geek communities" around the country.

Beijing Today found three such networks in Beijing.

Google Technology User Group (GTUG) in Beijing

GTUG is considered the largest online and offline global community for people who are interested in Google's developer technology. GTUG in Beijing is China's first GTUG group for developers, Web masters, IT pros and business people in Beijing and sur-



Both local and expats participate actively in all kinds of geek gatherings.

Photo provided by iWeekendbeijing.org

rounding areas to meet and share knowledge about using Google technologies. The group has only organized two technology seminars so far, but many are being planned.

Website: gtugs.org Open Party IT Community Unconference

Open Party is a regularly held social networking event gathering various technology commu-

nities in Beijing. Taking the form of "unconference," the open and interactive event provides a platform for IT practitioners or lovers to exchange and learn from each other. Themes of the events are

not limited to technology. Topics of lifestyle, travel, art, startup, business, investment and marketing are frequently discussed. For overseas participants and speakers, remote video discussions are convenient. Events normally take place on Saturdays.

Website: beijing-open-party.org

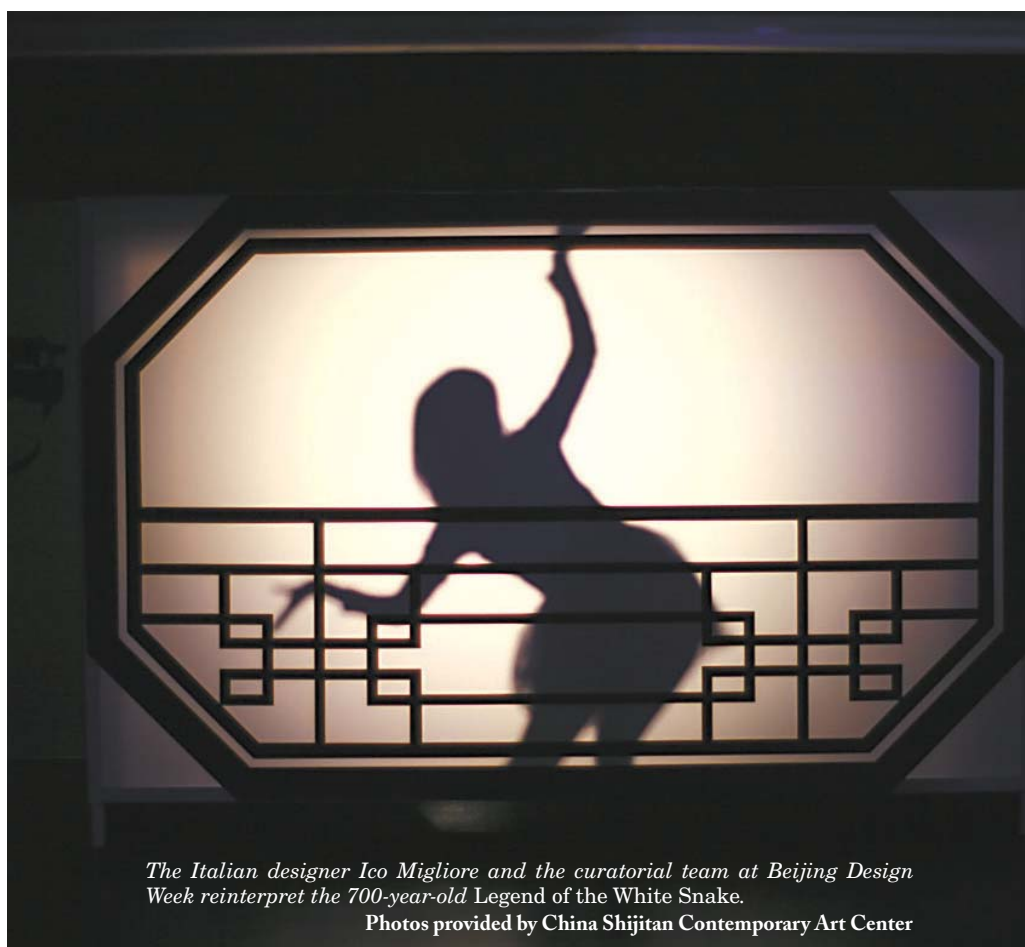
Event venue: 11/F Guohua Investment Building, 3 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng District
NTalks

NTalks is a monthly salon held in different cities in China, lining up important figures in various fields of new technologies to talk about new online trends. Since last March, nine events have been successfully conducted, drawing more than 100 IT startup entrepreneurs each time. The latest salon centered on cross-platform content production of new media and new principles of communications. Guest speakers included Frost Sullivan's China chief adviser Wang Yuquan, VIVA mobile new media company's vice president, Wang Jieming, and Ji Shisan, founder of Squirrel Science Club. Visit mabinode.tv to find out more.



Power in fusion

Old landmark a new icon for contemporary art



The Italian designer Ico Migliore and the curatorial team at Beijing Design Week reinterpret the 700-year-old Legend of the White Snake.

Photos provided by China Shijitan Contemporary Art Center

Pictures of facial sketches and scenery from traditional Chinese opera hang from the ceiling of China Shijitan Contemporary Art Center (CSCAC). Under the pictures are four cabinets, used as a series of small stages to show different parts of the 700-year-old story Legend of the White Snake.

Props decorate the on- and off-stage spaces, and video projections onto the fronts of the cabinets recall great moments in Chinese theater.

The installation is Cube Fusion, a new-media piece by Italian designer Ico Migliore and the curatorial team at Beijing Design Week that reinterprets the classics.

"This is a double space. We are showing things both traditional and modern, on- and off-stage together with drama and real life," Migliore said. "Unlike other forms of contemporary art, the function of an installation is to interact with the audience. If it does not communicate with viewers, it cannot be called a design."

Fable, theater, myth and ritual are the elements on which culture is built. Both China and Italy have a long history of operatic theater, so Migliore is eager to see how the traditional arts will survive in the modern era.

"In Italian opera, the sets are exquisite and complex, but in Chinese operas, everything is simplified," he said. "I have learned from my Chinese colleagues how to tell a story with simple medium."

Migliore also treats the work as a dialogue with the new space of the art center. "Some structures exist to protect humans, and most of these are enclosed spaces. One example is the house. But

other structures exist to tell the story of them," he said.

Transformed from old spaces, CSCAC is a matrix of new spaces. The art center is located in the corridor of the China Millennium Monument, a symbolic and commemorative structure that welcomes the year 2000.

"The China Millennium Monument is an iconic building in Beijing. It is a 270-meter bronze corridor of the time from the dawn of the time from the dawn of the time, but we seldom know what it is," Zhang Changchun, CSCAC, said.

Zhang invited American designer Ico Migliore to design the art center. "When I was basing it on a courtyard, it was perfect. The exhibition room and the theater is the same space," Zhang, also the director of CSCAC, said.

Initially, he hoped the center would break down the boundaries between the exhibition and performance spaces.

According to Ke's design, the center has a stable relationship between the exhibition and audience space to be a unique space for performance.

The theater and exhibition space are a unique space for performance and viewers, displays and it is a unique space for boundaries.

By He Jianwei

Tradition and modernity are at odds, and finding a balance between these forces is the task facing Chinese artists as they introduce their culture to the world stage.

At the beginning of the year, a new contemporary art center opened with a new media project created by Chinese and Italian artists to tell traditional stories with modern media.

"It is trivial to recreate traditional symbols with modern techniques, and we don't think it is good for the development of our culture. We want to emphasize innovation and try to find a bridge between the traditional and the modern," said Wang Jianqi, general manager of Beijing Gehua Cultural Development Group.



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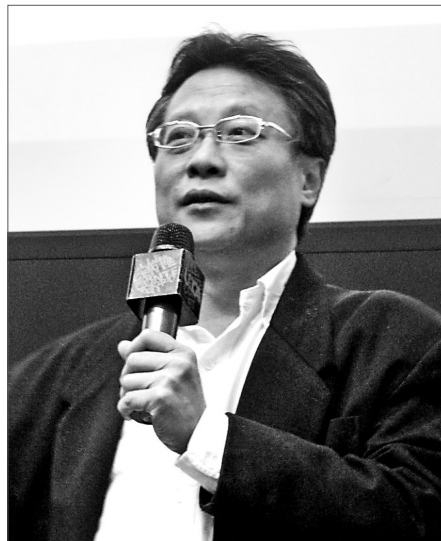
events. The 7-meter ceiling also makes it one of the few art spaces in the capital capable of housing larger works.
With the tone set by its first exhibition, the art center will focus on presenting exhibitions that border on performances. "We are looking for pieces that are open, that benefit the public and that cross traditional media lines," Zhang said.
Critics say this integration of traditional and contemporary culture is an urgent task for contemporary artists.
"Chinese contemporary art is like an unsettled case," said Zhu Qingsheng, an art critic. "Since 1978, Chinese contemporary art has deviated from traditional culture. Yet it also lacks the traditions of Western art."
He said that during a trip to Los Angeles last month, he learned that many American artists are watching China.
"There are two things they care about: what we did 3,000 years ago, and what we've done for 30 years. The first part is our traditional culture – something they respect even though we've thrown it out. The second is our current period of progress," he said.
"The big question facing contemporary artists today is finding a way to bridge this 2,970-year gap."
Cube Fusion is one such attempt.
"This piece creates a somewhat alienated environment, different from that of a typical theater or exhibition experience, with its layers of spatial, temporal and interactive possibilities," said Wang Jianwei, the project's artistic consultant.



Photo by Jia Ting



“It is a story of escape... about a young pugilist trying to escape from this world.”



“More than 2 million people ‘escaped’ to this island and lived in nostalgia.”

Escaping the past

Zhang Dachun keeps traditional lit alive

By He Jianwei

Zhang Dachun is widely hailed as one of the best contemporary Chinese novelists.

Taiwanese author Zhang Dachun has many fans on the mainland, even though the mainland has access to only four of his books: two on essays, one collection of short stories and one collection of criticism.

But now mainland readers can learn more about the man hailed as one of the best contemporary Chinese novelists with the publication of *Gangsters of the City State* (Chengbang Baolitian) by Shanghai People's Publishing House last Friday.

Hong Kong novelist Ni Kuang called it “the finest work of martial arts fiction since Jin Yong.”

The work, which blends kung fu, mixed martial arts and underground society into real-life Taiwan, tells of the dealings between criminal gangs and Nationalist secret service agents during the 1949 retreat.

The story begins in 1965 with the death of the leader of Green Gang, a secret society established in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). While the details are rooted in history, Zhang takes considerable artistic license.

This book takes place over three periods. The first dates back to Qing Dynasty with the origin of the Green Gang; the second is when the gangsters fight the Japanese during World War II and retreat to Taiwan; and the third is about a young character discovering the secrets of Taiwan's history since the 1960s.

Zhang started to write the novel in 1998. When the editor of a newspaper in Taipei contacted him to serialize it in a newspaper, Zhang suddenly imagined a young boy jumping from the fifth floor window and squatting on the ground.

“It is a story of escape,” Zhang said. “Almost all martial art fiction deals with



Gangsters of the City State (Chengbang Baolitian)

By Zhang Dachun, 852pp, Shanghai People's Publishing House, 72 yuan

how the character becomes a hero through combating evil people, or how he maintains order or brings it to the world. My story is about a young pugilist trying to escape from this world.”

Escape is also a reference to the generation shipped from the mainland to Taiwan in 1949 after Chiang Kai-shek's defeat. “More than 2 million people ‘escaped’ to this island and lived in nostalgia,” he said.

Unlike other contemporary novelists, Zhang follows traditional writing styles. Some readers have said it is impossible to finish the novel quickly due to the traditional poems and riddles buried in its text.

In Taiwan, writers usually come from famous intellectual families, like the Chu

Tien-wen and Chu Tien-Hsin families. They live in a world removed from society and they socialize with celebrities.

Zhang's father may have been a competent wordsmith, but he was a common civil servant removed from the literary scene.

While writers like Pai Hsien-yung and Lee Ou-fan have become leaders in the Taiwanese literature scene thanks to their dual background in Western culture, Zhang revels in storytelling and traditional comedy. After majoring in Chinese literature, he began supporting himself through ordinary jobs, choosing a more rustic life.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Zhang wrote for a living while creating television programs and documentaries and delivering occasional lectures at universities.

In 1988, he worked as the chief writer for a newspaper's literary supplement. After a few months he resigned, stating “third-class articles are not suitable for first-class writers.”

His reputation was cemented when he received the Taiwan Science Fiction Award in 1984 for *The Sorrow Dead*.

His two novels about growing up, *My Kid Sister* and *Wild Child*, have been translated into English. The stories show the disillusionment and cynicism of modern Taiwanese youth, and some critics have compared his *Wild Child* to JD Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.

Gangsters of the City State is reminiscent of Italian writer Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*.

The first edition of this novel, 1,100 pages in four books, was published in 1999 in Taipei. This was later expanded with a prequel and sequel in the 2009 second edition.

The text published by Shanghai People's Publishing House is taken from the second edition.

Bookworm book listing

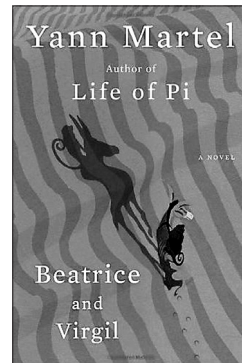
Vivian Wang from the Bookworm recommends the following bestsellers to Beijing Today readers.



Leave Me Alone: A Novel of Chengdu

By Murong Xuecun, 330pp, Make-Do Publishing, \$19.95

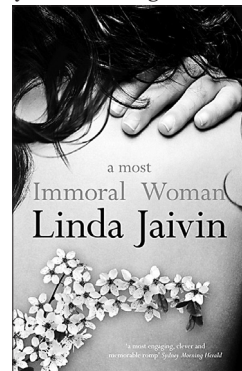
This book is the tragicomic struggle of Chen Zhong, Li Liang and Big Head Wang, three young men trying to make it in Chengdu. Despite their aspirations in the new market economy, the trio's lives are beset by dead-end jobs, gambling debts, drinking, drugs and whoring. While Chen loves his wife Zhao Yue, he remains a notorious philanderer. Only when he learns Zhao is having an affair of her own does he see exactly how much he stands to lose.



Beatrice and Virgil: A Novel

By Yann Martel, 224pp, Spiegel & Grau, \$24

When Henry receives a letter from an elderly taxidermist, it poses a puzzle that he cannot resist. As he is pulled further into the world of this strange and calculating man, Henry becomes increasingly involved with the lives of a donkey and a howler monkey – named Beatrice and Virgil – and the epic journey they undertake together.



A Most Immoral Woman

By Linda Jaivin, 384pp, Harper Collins, \$24.99

It is 1904, and the handsome and influential Australian George Ernest Morrison, 42, Beijing correspondent for *The Times of London*, is considered the most eligible Western bachelor in China. But Morrison has yet to meet his match – until one night, where the Great Wall meets the sea, he encounters Mae Perkins, the ravishing and free-spirited daughter of a California millionaire.

(By He Jianwei)



Hats can make your look creative.



By Wang Yu

January is a tough time to look your best: no one looks fashionable when cloaked in feather-stuffed clothes.

It's also the easiest time of the year to get sick, and many offices are now full of employees with coughs and fevers. Much of the time, these colds begin with a failure to dress for the weather.

But even a feather coat can be as fashionable as a tweed coat when paired with a suitable hat. This week, our guest fashion editor has some great tips to stay warm while looking good.

Smart looks to stay warm



Ladies' hats and ski pants

Beijing Today's Annie Wei wears ski pants in winter. It is a good idea for ladies who live near the office and like to walk or ride. A pair of silk stockings are enough indoors.

Hats with earflaps and Russian-style trapper hats are hot this winter. Though initially earflaps belonged only to men's fashion, hats with turn-down ears are extremely cool and practical. A trapper hat with a pompon is childish but also fashionable.

Country-style hats, like cozy loose-knit woolen ones, are not only the ideal casual option for urban walks, but also a very compact accessory that takes up little bag space. Such hats are always popular at ski resorts.

"When I don't drive, I wear an H&M Russian style or 'Leifeng' style hat to keep out cold. For strong and confident women, black hats are the best. It represents the classical 1950s style and the big hat also protects hair from harmful environmental exposure," Song says.

What he says?

"Russian style is great. It may be a little too much, but isn't fashion meant to be outstanding? I think girls look more confident and sexy in Russian hats."

— Chen Xi, office worker



Emma Stone, Natalie Portman, Kylie Minogue, Faye Wang and Angelina Jolie are models of winter fashion.

Ladies' jackets

Down jackets are usually the last items on a fashion fan's winter list unless they are into hip hop.

There are two reasons down jackets are so bemoaned by the fashionable: the bulky stuffing makes people look like the Michelin Man and all coats seem to follow the same designs.

But the advantages of feather coats are obvious. They weigh less than wool and keep you warmer: often a single T-shirt inside is enough. They are also cheaper than fur and safer when confronted by a mob of frothing animal activists.

But as technology has developed, so down coats have become lighter and thinner — features that have attracted a few designers.

"For most office ladies, down coats are ideal

because they can keep you warm when you wear your favorite skirt to the office," says Twiggy Song, fashion editor of *Cosmopolitan's* Chinese version.

Hollywood stars such as Blake Lively, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kelly Brook have given good examples of how to make down coats look good.

Pick a coat with a waistband to emphasize that you do indeed have a waist under all the fluff and give the coat some shape. Dark colors like deep gray, black, dark green and purple are popular. White and red can also be good choices.

Because of the material, bright colors are more fashionable.

"If you are still afraid your down coat may make you look fat, try a down waistcoat. You may have to wear a thick cardigan inside," Song says.

What he says

"Down coats are good during winter, but it's not very attractive to see a girl wearing a long one with a face-hiding hat. It makes them look like walking chess pieces."

— Vince Liu, IT engineer

Ladies' boots

This winter the focus is on lamb leather boots, not cow leather. It is easy to see from Burberry Prorsum's pilot jacket and boots. Double face leather has become the most popular material among the designers for its fashion potential and practical function.

Most double-face leather boots are made of shearling — a lambskin pelt that has gone through a limited shearing process to obtain a uniform depth of fibers for a uniform look and feel. The term refers to the pelt of a yearling sheep that has been shorn only once. A typical shearling pelt has suede on one side and shorn fibers on the other side.

"Many fashion buyers now see shearling boots as essential. They can keep your feet warm and are higher quality than the now-ubiquitous UGG boots. Skinny pants and an over-sized cardigan match best. You can also try black leggings when it is not that cold," Song says.

Over-the-knee boots are also made for those who only wear leggings. Boots with really tall shafts are extremely hot this season, and can be found with both low and high heels. Easy to wear, and very versatile, thigh-high boots look great with skirts and dresses, or with jeans or leggings tucked into them.



What he says

"Well, boots are great, but not UGG! It is outstanding to see a man wearing a pair of UGG boots, but I think guys are tired of see ladies wear them. To me, they're ugly and make you look cheap — especially since most of them are fakes from Taobao stores. Most guys around me share the same attitude."

— Chris Zhu, music promoter



Men's fashion

Mixing and matching is easy for men since men's styles change little. Though women's down coats may be getting some love, the men's versions are still plump and ugly. Stick to a military, double-breasted coat.

Jiujie, a juggling artist, impresses easily with his down waistcoat, gray heavy cardigan and black top hat. Instead of jeans, he wears cotton shorts with a pair of woolen long stocking with folk-style patterns. It is a semi-Japanese style and matches what he does.

"I think military coats, especially the N3B parka, are better for those who like to wear suits. Similar to the MODs in England in the 1960s, military coats look sharp and help protect the suits and keep out the cold. What girls can't stand is the typical Zhongguancun style — a black, oversized down coat with black suit and white shirt inside. It's a fashion disaster if the collar is anything short of immaculate," Song says.



NE•TIGER evening dress



Puma jumper, 339 yuan



Puma shoes, 590 yuan

Fashion for the new year and beyond



NE•TIGER evening dress with Chinese embroidery



Gap jeans, 399 yuan

NE•TIGER

Where: AA 31-33, Oriental Plaza, 1 Dongchang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 8518 6397

Zhongyi

Where: 2nd floor, Guomao Tower III, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Gap

Where: 138 Xindong'an Plaza, Wangfujing Avenue, Dongcheng District

Open: 9 am – 10 pm

Tel: 5817 7150

Puma

Where: 1st floor, The Place, 9 Guanghua Lu, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6587 1188

By Felix Gu

With Chinese New Year approaching, *Beijing Today* picks out garments with special Chinese characteristics that you can wear or give as gifts.

Beijing-based fashion label NE•TIGER has launched its latest collection, *Tiangan Dizhi* – “Heaven Stems and Earth Branches” – inspired by the Chinese zodiac. The collection consists of several contemporary evening dresses with stunning colors and delicate patterns, in the embroidery art of the Qiang ethnic minority.

Hong Kong-based Chinese Arts and Crafts recently opened a boutique in Beijing's World Trade Center Tower III. The company specializes in making jade products.

Inside the boutique one will find a ring with a calabash on it, signifying fortune in Chinese culture. A necklace has a ruyi-patterned stone jade. Ruyi is a curved decorative object that is a ceremonial scepter or talisman in Buddhism. It symbolizes power and good luck.

Another pair of earrings has a leaf pattern. While jade denotes peace, a leaf carries the meaning of nature and elegance.

Last but not least, take a look at some foreign labels. Gap has recently entered the Chinese market, opening stores at APM Shopping Center and Joy City Chaoyang that carry some limited-edition jeans specially made for China. The package is big and red, with a star on it. The company claims the materials in these jeans are danny cloth all from 1969.

Puma, a German shoe and sportswear company, has launched a series of cuter-than-cute garments, with the theme of rabbit. 2011, of course, is the year of the rabbit.



Gap leopard shoes, 299 yuan



Jade accessories

Photos provided by NE•TIGER/Puma/Gap/Chinese Arts and Crafts

Fishing time!

By Pang Xiaoqiao

Freshwater fish – especially those from the Yangtze River and long enjoyed by southerners – is increasingly finding favor with northern diners. *Beijing Today* has scouted Beijing to find good restaurants that put the fresh back in freshwater fish.



Steamed fish from the Yangtze River, seasonal prices Photos provided by Jiayu Freshwater Fish Restaurant



Jiayu hotpot

Jiayu Freshwater Fish – healthy fish hotpot

Jiayu is a kind of fish native to Hubei Province; it also means to serve guests your best. It's for this latter reason that Deng Gefang, the restaurant owner, chose this name.

The restaurant combines fish and hotpot with a special double-flavor stock (58 yuan) – spicy on one side, tomato-flavored on the other. Before eating the fish, diners should sip tomato soup to whet the appetite.

The restaurant is picky when it comes to ingredients. To insure its appearance and taste, they use tomatoes from Xinjiang Province. The spicy stock includes ingredients such as pickled pepper, garlic, canola oil and blending oil. Both the spicy and tomato stocks are simmered with soup stock that has been boiled for more than eight hours with pig shoulder, hen meat, ham, green onions and ginger. The dipping sauce includes wild pepper, spiced salt, soybeans and herbal houttuyniae, a plant that helps prevent inflammation caused by spicy foods.

Another of the restaurant's attractions is the wide variety of fish it serves. There are more than 30 kinds of fish from the upper Yangtze, some that are rare and unusual, like suckerfish (288 yuan for 500 grams), daisy fish (398 for 500 grams) and yenus fish (188 yuan for 500 grams), which are only available here in Beijing.

"Because some of these fish are seasonal, they are not always available," said restaurant manager Chen Qifu. "Some orders need to be placed two or three days ahead of time, and we will fly in the fish."

More than 10 types of fish are always available.

Chen also recommended swordfish (188 yuan for 500 grams) and roundnose catfish (188 yuan for 500 grams). Furthermore, he suggested eating fish with scales instead of ones without, such as eel. The former group lives closer to the water's surface and will taste fresher, and the skin is rich in colloidal material.

Apart from hotpot, the restaurant offers fish dishes as well, such as steamed fish. Cold dishes such as preserved cherry radish (16 yuan) are welcomed for their light taste.

The house sugarcane drink (60 yuan for a pitcher) is worth trying. It is 100 percent natural without any added sugar.

The service at Jiayu Freshwater Fish is exceptional. If you come to eat hotpot, a personal waiter will stand by your table to help cook the fish from beginning to end.

Jiayu Freshwater Fish

Where: Building 9, 54 Dong San Huan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District (near Dong Jinsongqiao)

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 8779 5955 / 5966

Cost: Average 120 yuan per person

Other recommendations

Three Guizhou Men

Three Guizhou Men specializes in fish in sour soup and serves authentic dishes from Guizhou Province. Roast fish in Hmong style is unique and worth trying. Sometimes the restaurant will offer discounts, such as buy-one, get-one-free deals on fish.

Where: 717, 7 Jianwai SOHO East Building, 39 Dong San Huan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 5869 2598

Cost: Average 80 yuan per person

Jiangbianchengwai Wushan Roast Fish

Roast fish has become fashionable recently, but the best is at this location. The restaurant provides fish in several flavors, including black bean sauce and pickled Chinese cabbage.

The catfish is good because it has few scales and bones, and its thick flesh gives a strong flavor. There is also hotpot here.

Where: 35 Xiaoyun Road, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 11 pm

Tel: 6467 0658

Cost: Average 60 yuan per person

Wangshunge Yutou Paobing

Yutou paobing is stewed fish with Chinese pancake in a thick soup – often with a big fish head in the center of the plate. The fish is first braised in soy sauce and stewed for more than three hours.

Where: 88 Jianguo Road, Bawangfen SOHO, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 2:30 pm, 5-10 pm

Tel: 8589 8800 / 8811

Cost: Average 90 yuan per person



Three Guizhou Men's pork ribs, 68 yuan



Stewed fish with bread in thick soup



Roasted fish Photos provided by Maitian/CFP/Google



State of modernity

By He Jianwei

At first glance, Lü Peng's paintings seem like a maze. Viewers are entranced by the details on the canvas, such as, in one work, the multitude of characters both ancient and modern that seem to encapsulate the feeling of living in an uproariously modern city.

But what the artist really wants is to invite viewers to think about the complexity and wildness of the modern era.

Lü, who studied traditional painting in college, inherits the ancient artistic tradition of

depicting nature and telling a tale on paper. On the other hand, he also uses the modern Western art methods of observation and expression to reveal the essence of reality.

"He fills the canvas with symbolic historical allusions and characters representative of their times, creating a complex picture of society more realistic than reality," curator Li Ying said.

Lü lets the characters under his brush transcend time and space, intertwining them to reconstruct the "realness" of the age in which we live.

For instance, in his work *The Age of Innocence*, Lü paints two red-crowned cranes, which symbolize longevity in traditional Chinese painting. There is also an archer wearing the traditional gown of either the Tang (618-907) or Song (960-1279) dynasty.

But the main characters in the picture are two modern children wearing sunglasses, with exaggerated facial expressions and body movements.

"If we look closely, the characters on the canvas are all slightly surprised, which is a

reflection of our era," Li said. "Just like when we walk among the flow of people in the city, things appear and disappear quickly one after another."

Lü realizes that modernization places people in situations in which they must respond quickly to new emerging phenomena. In such circumstances, new things are quickly discarded, and moments are fleeting, such as when people pass others on the street.

"Characters described by Lü are in such a state, that they must squeeze themselves on a canvas measured in square meters, or fight against each other, or play with each other, just to own a small living space, just to be able to cohabitate with totally unrelated people or things that surround them – which they have apparently no time or desire to think about," Li said.

Empty Age –

Lü Peng Solo Exhibition

Where: Dialogue Space Gallery, 22 International Art Plaza, 32 Baizhuan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: January 22 – February 28, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 5876 9392

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Friday, January 14

Movie The Wind Will Carry Us (1999)

This Iranian film is about a group of journalists and production engineers who arrive in a Kurdish village to document the locals' mourning rituals in anticipation of the death of an elderly woman.

Where: Sculpting in Time (inside Beihang University), 37 Xueyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm
Admission: 15 yuan
Tel: 8231 0664

Nightlife Namo

Inspired by Buddhism, this folk rock band expresses the thoughts of the younger Chinese generation, particularly how they view their social lives.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8 pm
Admission: 40 yuan, 30 yuan for students
Tel: 6401 4611

Exhibition



Memories of Red – Somewhere and Nowhere

This photo exhibition shows Japanese photographer Nochioka Yoshimobu's snapshots of modern Shanghai.

Where: 798 Photo Gallery, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 28, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 6438 1784

6

Saturday, January 15

Exhibition Self Image – Woman Art in China (1920-2010)

This exhibition features works by Chinese female artists who grew up in the 1920s and those who grew up in the 21st century.

Where: China Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) Art Museum, 8 Huajiadi Nanjie, Chaoyang District

When: Until February 20, daily except Monday, 9:30 am – 5:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6477 1575

Nightlife Salome

The Nine Theater Dance group illustrates Oscar Wilde's play, *Salome*, with modern dance.

Where: Nine Theater (TNT), Chaoyang Culture Center, 12 Jintai Li,

Chaoyang District
When: 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-280 yuan, 50 yuan for students, 380 yuan for VIP
Tel: 8599 1188

Movie Frequently Asked Questions About Time Travel (2009)

This science fiction comedy follows three social outcasts who attempt to navigate a time travel conundrum while in a British pub.

Where: Lady Book Saloon, 69 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6270 1928



7

Sunday, January 16

Movie Ariel (1988)

This film is about a coal miner who becomes unemployed, homeless and broke after his father commits suicide. He meets a single mother who is working a range of low-end careers to pay off her debts. They decide to live together forever, but fate has a cruel twist in store.

Where: Ullens Center for

Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students
Tel: 8459 9269

Nightlife In Beijing

Five Beijing-based expat bands will perform: Boy No. 6, Christmas, Low Bow, The Amazing Insurance Salesmen and Red Pirates.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111

Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30 pm
Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door
Tel: 6402 5080

Exhibition After Point, Line and Surface... – Hong Shaopei Solo Exhibition

Influenced by Anton S. Kandinsky, Taiwanese artist Hong uses acrylic paint and strong colors in his art.

Where: Beijing Art Now

Gallery, Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 31, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5127 3292



Upcoming

Nightlife Borneo

This European band incorporates rock with the soulful elements of the '60s and '70s.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: January 19, 9 pm
Admission: 30 yuan
Tel: 6404 2711

Stage in February

Concert

Leon Fleisher Piano Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 4, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-580 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

A Tribute to Teresa Teng

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 8, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-1,080 yuan
Tel: 5166 1145

Sun Yingdi Piano Recital

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 200-280 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Andras Schiff Piano Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 27, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-680 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Dance

Dance of Desire

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: February 12-14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-380 yuan
Tel: 6551 8058

Drama

The Life Opinions of Two Dogs

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: February 12-14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-380 yuan
Tel: 6551 8058

Out of Order

Where: Theater Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 19-21, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-30 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

Verdi's Opera: La Traviata

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 13-17, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-580 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

Separating moles from melanoma

By Chu Meng

If *You Are the One 2*, a sequel to one of the country's top box office hits, just made history by becoming the first Chinese release to open in North America on the same day.

But while it was making history, this romantic comedy also brought new attention to a forgotten foe: melanoma.

In the movie, star actor Li Xiangshan is thrown a lavish divorce party when he and his wife split up as he bids farewell to life. His killer is a mole-turned-cancer on his right foot.

Li Hang, a senior dermatologist at Peking University First Hospital, received a tenfold increase in requests for melanoma screening after the movie debuted.

"Our outpatient volume for mole removal grew 40 in the first week after the film's release. My first patient came only one hour after the release, at 10 pm that night. In truth, 99.9 percent of these patients are just paranoid about their common moles," Li said.

Most dangerous skin cancer

Melanoma is the least common but most dangerous form of skin cancer. The disease progresses quickly after diagnosis and worsens fast. Most patients die within months.

"There has never been a case of melanoma that went into remission. We call it the cancer of cancers. It affects 5 percent of the people who get skin cancer, but it is responsible for 75 percent of all cancer deaths every year," Li said.

Nearly everybody get moles, but among Asians, about 8.3 people in every 100,000 develop melanoma. It is far less prevalent among blacks, whose skin has more natural pigmentation to resist environmental damages.

However, the morbidity rate of melanoma among whites is 10 times as high as among blacks due to limited pigmentation.

Pigmentation malfunction

Melanoma develops in cells called melanocytes. Melanocytes are the cells that give skin pigmentation, and pigmentation is responsible for skin color.

But regardless of skin color, there is a risk factor when the skin is exposed to ultraviolet (UV) rays.

As skin is exposed to UV from the sun, more pigmentation is produced to prevent burns. The end result is damage to the DNA, which can in turn cause a malfunction of the pigment-producing cells. This becomes life-threatening when damaged cells develop in the lymphatic system.

Li pointed out that UV rays can also be found in the winter, on cloudy days and indoors. Tanning on the beach is extremely dangerous, but because UV rays can also be found in tanning booths and lamps, indoor tanning is no safer.

People with many moles are at a higher risk of developing melanoma. Although most moles are benign and can be overlooked, there are certain types that carry a higher risk, such as dysplastic nevi: atypical moles. These often have a melanoma-like appearance.

Other risk factors for developing melanoma are a family history of the disease, certain medications and gender, since men tend to develop melanoma more often than women.

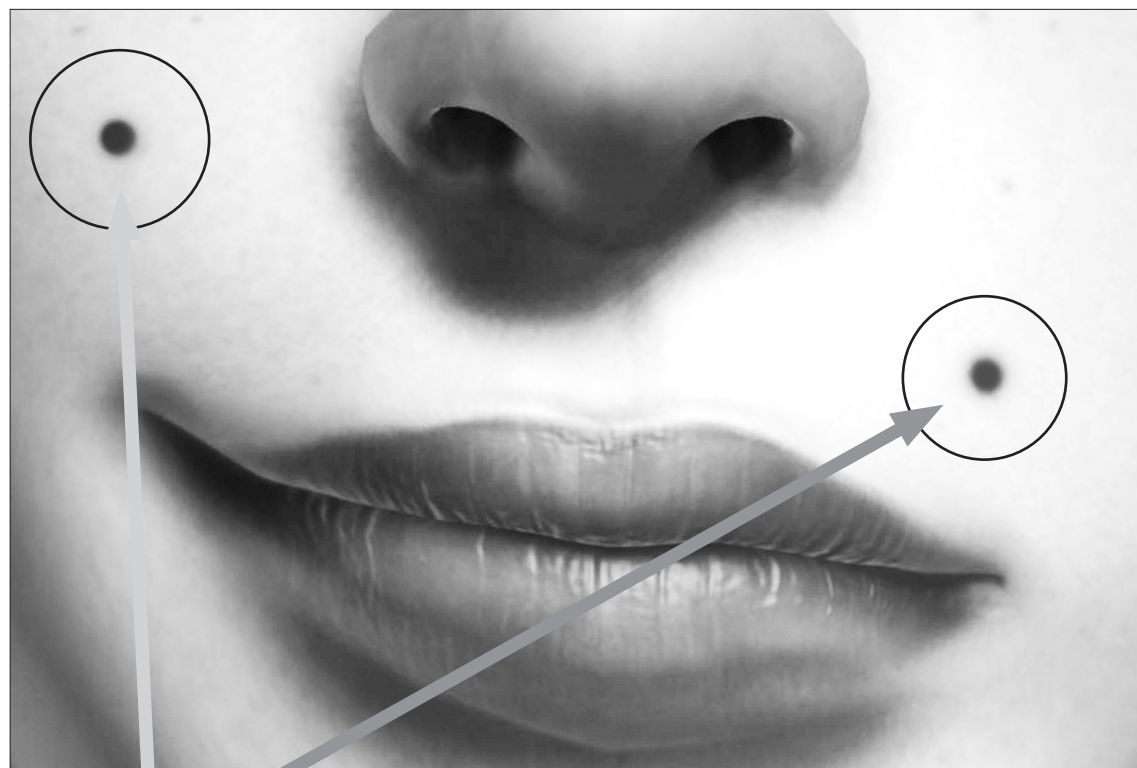


Photo provided by Xiao Lin

"ABCDE" self-diagnosis

Even though melanoma can be life threatening if left untreated or diagnosed in its late stages, there is no need to rush to the hospital for screening. Fewer than 10 in 10,000 inspected moles are cancerous.

Early self-detection at home can help patients spot moles that may be trouble. Most skin cancers are survivable when detected early.

"Moles are more common and less annoying than acne. Most people are born with them, but few know that frequent self checks are necessary, and sometimes life-saving," Li said.

He introduced a five-step, simplified diagnosis to help people differentiate between melanomas and benign moles:

A-Asymmetry: Normal moles or freckles are completely symmetrical. If people draw a line through a normal mole, there should be two

symmetrical halves. Melanomas will not look the same on both sides — they do not have regular shapes.

B-Border: A mole will have clear and smooth edges, but melanoma has blurry and jagged edges.

C-Color: Normal moles or spots are usually one color, either lighter or darker than the surrounding skin. Melanomas usually have more than one color. "If one of your common moles suddenly changes colors during a very short period of time, say three or four weeks, it is very suspicious and needs to be evaluated by a doctor," Li said.

D-Diameter: If it is larger than a pencil eraser, about 6 millimeters in diameter, it needs to be examined by a doctor. This includes areas that do not have any other abnormalities of color, border, asymmetry. Moles are usually smaller than

2 millimeters. "However, even large moles, as long as they are growing a few hairs, are [probably] benign," he said.

E-Elevation: Elevation means the melanoma is raised and has an uneven surface. A mole usually cannot be felt only by hand because they are normally flat.

Li said more than 90 percent of melanoma cases occur on the hands and feet. "Sometimes, melanoma also happens at less remarkable places like between the thighs and under the arms, but these places are also exposed to a lot of friction."

Pay special attention to abrupt changes in color, shape and size. Sometimes cancerous areas may be itchy, scaly or crusty.

"Go see your dermatologist immediately when you see any such signal," Li said.

Skin care the first line of defense

Though the exact cause of melanoma has yet to be found, protecting skin from sunburn is an effective way to prevent many skin-related illnesses.

1. Avoiding excessive exposure to UV-A and UV-B rays. Apply a facial cream that offers UV protection before going outdoors during winter.

Anti-UV lotion is also recommended when staying indoors during extremely sunny days. Wear sunscreen when outdoors, and stay out of the sun during the peak exposure hours between 11 am and 3 pm.

2. Protect children from sun exposure by playing in the shade, using protective

clothing and applying sunscreen. Use extra caution near water, snow and sand, because these reflect damaging rays.

3. Avoid tanning beds. Ultraviolet light from the sun and tanning beds can cause skin cancer and wrinkling. If you want to look like you've been in the sun, consider using

a sunless self-tanning product, but continue to use sunscreen with it.

4. Avoid using concentrated chemical lotions and cosmetics. The thinner the makeup the better. Choose products made with natural or organic ingredients.

5. Get vitamin D through

a healthy diet that may include vitamin supplements. Do not seek the sun too much when you want to stimulate calcium absorption intake. **6. Avoid irritating or injuring moles on the hands or feet.** Sometimes, frequent exterior irritation can cause benign moles to turn cancerous.



Each of the 13 Tombs has similar features, with gates, yards, halls and pavilions in typical Ming style.

A hike to the grand Ming Tombs

By Zhang Dongya

Joseph Needham, one of the most important foreigners in Chinese history in the 20th century, once said: "The royal mausoleum is an important breakthrough in the field of Chinese architecture. It is, to some extent, the most meaningful and influential example of the combination of architecture and landscape."

And so it is that the Thirteen Tombs of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) rank among the greatest masterpieces of Chinese architecture.

Scattered in the mountains of northwest Beijing, the 13 Tombs offer a good place for mountain hiking and sightseeing of ancient Chinese architecture. Lüye, an outdoor community, developed a one-day itinerary for trekkers.



A five-arch bridge was rebuilt near Deling Tomb.



Scattered in the mountains of northwest Beijing, the Ming Tombs offer a good place for mountain hiking. Photos by Li Xin

Royal mausoleum complex

The 13 Tombs are located in Tianshou Mountain, part of the Yanshan Mountains north of Beijing. The location, chosen by the Emperor Yongle (1402-24), was said to be the best site according to feng shui. The first tomb built was the Changling Tomb, in 1409; the last was the tomb of Ming emperor Chongzhen, Siling Tomb, more than 200 years later.

The nearest distance between two tombs is half a kilometer, while the longest distance is about 8 kilometers. Except for Siling Tomb, all the tombs are arrayed on either side of Shen Lu, or Divine Way.

A stone arch gate marks the starting point of Divine Way. A stele pavilion and cluster of stone carvings of animals are decorated on both sides. Just inside, to the east and west, are Dragon Mountain and Tiger Mountain.

Sixteen emperors ruled over the Ming, but only 13 have tombs. The first Ming emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang, set the capital in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, and built his tomb, Mingxiaoling, there. The second Ming emperor, Zhu Yunwen, is said to have died mysteriously, possibly in a fire in Nanjing, though some believe he escaped and lived out his life as a monk. The seventh emperor, Zhu Qiyu, is buried in Yuquan Mountain in western Beijing with other military governors.

Each of the 13 Tombs has similar features, with gates, yards, halls and pavilions in typical Ming style. But some have aged much better than others. Only three tombs – Changling, Dingling and Zhaoling – are open to the public. But one can hike around the other 10 to get a comprehensive understanding of their layout, conditions and surroundings.



Neat brick cottages can be found in villages near the tombs

Hiking the tombs

The hike begins from a restored seven-arch bridge that has kept its original white railings. Some columns and railings are old articles from the Ming Dynasty, with refined carvings. Unfortunately, several column caps with delicate stone carvings have been stolen. The question of how to protect cultural relics is an ongoing concern.

Two villages have been built on either side of a dirt road from the bridge: Beixin Village and Deling Village. Deling Village, with neat brick cottages, is named after the first tomb. Piles of firewood are in front of each cottage, which villagers burn to keep warm.

Continued on page 21...

...continued from page 20

Deling Tomb, restored with a new roof and cinnabar red walls, is the mausoleum of the 15th emperor, Zhu Youxiao, and his empress. It is a medium-sized mausoleum with an arch door that is locked, though visitors can peek inside from a crack in the gate.

In front of the hall is a stone stele with an inscription. Stone carvings of dragons remain vivid.

Walking through the Yongling and Jingling tombs, visitors will come to Changling Tomb within an hour. Changling is the earliest, largest and best-preserved tomb. It houses Emperor Zhu Di and his empress.

Ling'en Hall is the oldest wooden hall in Beijing. It is famous for the 32 pillars made of phoebe wood. Each pillar has a diameter of one meter, wide enough so that it takes two people to wrap their arms around it. The phoebe, which grow in deep forests, is quite rare. Compared with painted palace pillars, the columns here are lightly scented and have natural veins that look good without artificial coloring.

Close to Changling are five tombs arranged in a line: Xianling, Qingling, Yuling, Maoling and Tailing. These tombs, unfortunately, are in poor condition.

Behind a rusty iron gate, Qingling Tomb, the mausoleum of the 14th emperor, has cracking walls, weedy stairs and run-down halls. The stele, which is well preserved at least, is on the other side of the gate.

A 15-minute walk away is Yuling Tomb, which houses the sixth emperor, Zhu Qizhen. It was constructed in four months – fastest among the tombs. It was restored during Emperor Qianlong's reign during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) 200 years ago, but it has just about completely collapsed due to heavy weathering.

The stone stairs leading to the gate are broken. In the first yard, the Ling'en gate and halls have been destroyed, with side halls and auxiliary build-

ings all gone. The only building standing in the second yard is broken and torn.

The neighboring Maoling Tomb, eighth emperor Zhu Jianshen's mausoleum, was restored last year.

Passing through Kangling Tomb, the 10th emperor Zhu Houzhao's mausoleum, you will have to walk another hour before reaching two tombs open to the public: Dingling and Zhaoling.

Dingling is the tomb of Emperor Wanli, built between 1584 and 1590. It is the only tomb that has been thoroughly excavated.

Starting in 1956, more than 3,000 pieces of articles were unearthed, including court dresses, jewels, vessels, weapons, porcelain and gold bullions. The sixth emperor Zhu Qizhen banned the ritual of burying the living with the dead, so no people were buried along with the deceased after that.

The Zhaoling Tomb, inhabited by the 12th emperor Zhu Zaihou, is the first tomb to be completely restored.

The last tomb is Siling Tomb, located in the southwest corner, the resting place of the last emperor of Ming, Zhu Youjian, or Emperor Chongzhen. Chongzhen hanged himself on a tree on Jingshan when the Ming fell. He was later buried in Siling during the Qing Dynasty. All the buildings and halls were built later in Qing as a way for that dynasty to gain favor with its subjects.

Getting there: Take Bus 345 from Deshengmen Xi to Qikongqiao.

Note: The hike takes about six hours. Visitors should bring water and food.

Admission: (November 1 – March 31)

15 yuan for Shenlu (Divine Way)

20 yuan for Zhaoling Tomb

30 yuan for Changling Tomb

40 yuan for Dingling Tomb



The only building standing in the second yard of Yuling is run-down.



Tianshou Mountain, chosen as the site of the Ming Tombs, is considered a place with ideal feng shui.



Peeling walls of the royal mausoleums witness the changing of time.



Yuling Tomb, which houses the sixth emperor, Zhu Qizhen, is badly ruined due to heavy weathering.

Photos by Li Xin

Dining



Fall in love with fondue

For diners with a sweet tooth, Kempinski's chocolate fondue is an indulgence not to be missed. Made of 100 percent pure Valrhona chocolate, it comes with fluffy marshmallows, rich brownie pieces and a selection of seasonal fruit for your dipping pleasure.

Where: Paulaner Brauhaus and Rendezvous Bar & Lounge, Kempinski Hotel, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until February 28, daily 11:30 am – 2 pm, 6-10 pm at Paulaner Brauhaus; 11 am – 10 pm at Rendezvous Bar & Lounge
Tel: 6465 3388 ext. 4212/4225



Love at the Grand Millennium

Valentine's Day is truly special, and at the Grand Millennium Beijing it's even more so. The hotel is celebrating love throughout the month of February.

Come on February 14 for a Valentine's Day Dinner with a special set menu for two. The evening includes champagne, roses and chocolates in a romantic setting for 666 yuan.

Or stop in at the Lobby Lounge between February 1 and 24 to indulge in your craving for sweets with a chocolate fondue priced at 166 yuan. Specially catered Heart Chocolates will be available on Valentine's Day for 96 yuan per box.

Where: Grand Millennium Beijing, Fortune Plaza, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6530 9383

New menu for Valentine's at Sofitel Wanda

A new menu has been designed for Valentine's Day at Sofitel Wanda Beijing. Enjoy the romantic day with your choice of goose liver terrine; Saint-Jaques scallops; celery velvety; veal filet mignon; and chocolate and hazelnut.

Where: Sofitel Wanda Beijing, Tower C, Wanda Plaza, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District
When: February 14
Tel: 8599 6666

Sunday Brunch at Kempinski

Gourmet food, jazz and professional children's entertainment provided by House of Knowledge, International Kindergarten make Kranzler's the place to be on Sundays.

Dine on authentic German cuisine, classic Italian fare and a mouthwatering spread of Japanese and Chinese specialties; and don't forget about our New Zealand oysters, foie gras and Swiss cheese fondue.

Family Brunch and Sparkling Package: Pair your brunch with unlimited home-brewed Paulaner beer, sparkling wine and a selection of fine white and red wines from our cellar.

Champagne Package – Duval Leroy, one of the world's finest champagnes, adds a perfect touch to your lavish brunch.

Where: Kempinski Hotel, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 11:30 – 3 pm

Cost: Family Brunch, 328 yuan; Sparkling Package, 368 yuan; Champagne Package, 448 yuan; Kids Brunch (ages 6-12) 164 yuan (15 percent surcharge)

Tel: 6465 3388 ext. 4222 (reservations recommended)

Email: restaurant.beijing@kempinski.com



Delicious dips at Grand Millennium Beijing

Enjoy classic hotpot delights and a superb dinner buffet spread at CBD's favorite dining venue! Cook your dinner delights to perfection right at your own table. The dinner buffet starts at 226 yuan. Hotpot will be served now through February 27, so make your reservations soon. Be one of the hotel's first 30 diners of the day for a fabulous discount.

Where: CBD Western restaurant, Grand Millennium Beijing, Fortune Plaza, 7 Dong Sanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: through February 27

Tel: 6530 9383 (15 percent surcharge)

Event

Awakening art appreciation – Lixin's paintings

Yishu8 is inviting the family to an "Awakening Art Appreciation in Young Children" this Saturday. The workshop, led by Laurent Ferrier, will use the imaginary world of Lixin, a Chinese artist whose works are currently being exhibited at Yishu 8, to introduce to children the art of appreciating and creating art.

Built around interactive exchanges and games, the workshop will help these fledgling artists develop their curiosity and creativity.

Parents can meet for a cup of tea and discover the works of Lixin under the guidance of Christine Cayol, Yishu 8 founder.

Where: Yishu8, 8 Langjiayuan, Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

When: January 15, 3-4:30 pm

Cost: Free

Tel: 6581 9058

Hotel



Joseph Zitnik (left) and Melissa Lau

U-Town Crowne Plaza appoints new leaders

American hotelier Joseph E. Zitnik has been named general manager of Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town, a new 360-room, five-star hotel opening this month in the Central Business District.

Zitnik has more than 20 years' experience in the hospitality industry, including opening or re-branding of seven hotels as general manager.

He graduated from the University of Hawaii and started his career in 1988 with Hyatt Regency Waikiki in Honolulu. He remained at Hyatt until 1991, serving in Hong Kong and Saipan.

From 1992 to 1997 he was with the Singapore-based Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts working at three properties and as general manager at Banyan Tree resorts in Philippines and Bali.

Zitnik's next move was to open and manage the Hard Rock Hotel in Bali.

Melissa Lau was appointed director of sales and marketing at Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town on October 22. Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town is having its soft opening this month.

As senior international hospitality manager, Lau comes to Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town with 15 years of sales and marketing experience.

She has worked in the Swissotel Group, Hilton Hotels Group, Shangri-La Hotels Group, InterContinental Hotel Hotels and Accor Hotels Group in important positions, and she worked in the pre-opening and business development of Pullman Beijing West Wanda.

Before joining in Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town, she was working at Crowne Plaza Tianjin Binhai in the same position.

Shangri-La puts job safety, health first

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts is announcing that Shangri-La Hotel, Qingdao has obtained OSHA18001 certification, making it the first five-star hotel on the mainland to achieve this benchmark.

OSHA18001 is an Occupational Safety and Health Assessment Series management system specification evolved within the US system and recognized around the world. It sets requirements for occupational safety and health management and was developed in response to widespread demand for focus on safety and welfare.

Certified enterprises aim to reduce the exposure of employees and other parties to occupational safety and health hazards.

"We are very pleased to become the first five-star hotel in mainland China to achieve this. Occupational safety and health is of the utmost importance. With this certification, Shangri-La Hotel, Qingdao has met an internationally recognized standard for occupational safety and health and fully demonstrates its ongoing commitment to occupational safety and health for our hotel guests and hotel employees," said Gary Biondo, general manager of Shangri-La Hotel, Qingdao. (By Jackie Zhang)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week

Check the john

By Huang Daohen

John is such a common English name that even when you call it out in a class at a university in China, there will be several respondents, both local and foreign.

But John is not just another name. My friend Helen, who works for an American public relations company, shared her new understanding of the word at a recent get-together.

Helen regularly gets urgent documents that her boss Albert needs to sign. But one day, she couldn't find Albert in the office, coffee room or conference room. So she asked her colleague, Chuck, who was focused on his work, whether he had any idea where Albert was.

"Check the john," Chuck said without looking up.

"But I desperately need Albert, not John," said Helen, who suspected Chuck so busy he misheard her question.

Stunned, Chuck stopped his work and asked Helen to follow him. They went outside the office. "Albert is in the john," Chuck said, pointing to the toilet not far away. It was then that Albert walked out. Helen and Chuck could not help but laugh, leaving Albert embarrassed.

"I've learned and used English for many years, but that was the first time I encountered 'john' as a nickname for 'toilet,'" Helen said.

"The john" is short for John Harrington, who invented the first flush toilet in the late 1500s. Harrington installed it for Queen Elizabeth I, and the Queen affectionately referred to it as her "john."

There are some other common uses for the word, Helen said. John is also slang for a person who patronizes prostitutes. There is also the "Dear John letter," which is written



by a wife or girlfriend to inform her significant other that their relationship is over.

Referring to "the John" thing, Helen said there are many other phrases that Chinese people might misunderstand. For instance, when a

guest says, "I must see a man about a dog," what he actually means is he needs to visit the john: "doghouse" means toilet.

Similar phrases include "cash a check," "go to the bank" and "go pick flowers."

1. Obesity triggers for early puberty.

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): "To trigger" is a transitive verb, meaning "to set off"; or "(informally) to begin, to start or to initiate." For instance, A spark triggered the explosion. An A-bomb is needed to trigger an H-bomb. When it means to begin or to start, it may be informally "to trigger off," for instance, At present, we cannot make rain, however, we can trigger it off from suitable clouds. The confrontation may trigger off a nuclear war. It is very similar to "spark off." However, it can never be combined with "for." So, the sample sentence should be: Obesity triggers early puberty. There is one point we should take note of: when trigger is used as a noun, there is indeed a combination of trigger with "for": The food may be a trigger for salivation.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): Let's break this down a bit for grammar beginners. A "verb" is an action word. A "transitive verb" means that it is an action word which needs to be followed by something that (or someone who) receives the action – this word is called the "direct object" and says "what" or "whom" received the action. Now, "for" is a preposition, and good luck learning those. The opposite of a transitive verb is an "intransitive" one, and, just to confuse everyone, some verbs switch, depending on how they are used in a sentence. So do prepositions. Here is another sentence: English grammar triggers mental meltdowns in many students of English writing.

2. No one can assure the changes will bring positive effects.

ZS: The verb to assure is wrongly used here. We know that "assure" is a transitive verb, meaning "to tell positively or confidently, to make a person sure or certain, or convince somebody." It always takes a person (or persons) as the object. For instance, They assured us that the plane would arrive on time. After the fire, the captain assured the passengers that there was no danger. The man assured himself that the bridge was safe before crossing it. But, the verb "to assure" can never take a direct object clause, like in the sample sentence. The writer here is confused with the verb to assure with the phrase "be sure (that)." They are used differently though they look fairly similar. The sample sentence should be: No one can be sure that the changes will bring positive effects.

TBZ: I can assure you that English grammar will get easier. The more you study the grammar rules carefully, the more you read (and pay attention to the grammar while reading), and the more you pick up your pen to write your own articles, you can be sure that you will see a great improvement in your English grammar skills in a very short period of time. Begin keeping an English journal, be sure to write in it every day, assure yourself that mistakes are allowed – you are learning – and keep going!

3. Screw

ZS: Screw as a noun means "a metal pin with a spiral ridge on a tapered shank used as a fastener." As a slang verb, it may mean "do harm to," as in "screw our political opponents." It also has a sense of eccentricity, as in "having a screw loose." The adjective screwy may mean "zany, wacky, dizzy," which is signified by a finger twirling in a screwing motion pointed at the head. The baseball pitcher Carl Hubbell adopted Christy Mathewson's arm-twisting reverse curve and called it a screwball. You have to be careful with the verb "to screw." When people say screw around, it suggests promiscuity. However, when around is substituted for up, it obliterates its sexual connotation. The verb phrase to screw up means "bungle, botch, mishandle." It may be a kind of candid admission of error in a familiar way. For instance, President Barack Obama assumed responsibility for the bungled vetting of Tom Daschle for a cabinet position with a disarming, "I screwed up."

TBZ: Only the US president can get away with using such an informal phrase in such a formal setting. For the rest of us, we had better learn another way to say it: from another informal "I messed up" to "I admit that it was my fault" to, "Call my secretary and I will get back to you as soon as I get back from my vacation in an obscure, remote corner of the planet" – it's all shades of language, and language improves gradually as we read and study, learn and practice.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

WC – No Occupying While Stabling

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

I took this photo on the train from Beijing to Shanghai a couple months ago. As most of you know, riding the train in China is an experience on its own, and visiting the loo during the trip is a big part of that.

The bathrooms used to be so dirty. A person would hold his or her business as long as possible. You had to time it right, though, because once you waded through the crowd of people with standing tickets, you still had to get in line for the facility. Then you had the pleasure of standing in the stink until it was your turn. The lock usually didn't work and there certainly wasn't any toilet paper. Usually no running water (so no flushing) either. Not much different than a horse stable, really.



Photo by Terry Boyd-Zhang

The trips were long and stops were plenty. If you timed your WC adventure incorrectly (see the top sign – *cesuo*), the train would pull into a station and a train conductor would come and lock up the toilet. (See the first two characters on the sign below – *tingche*, or stop train.) You'd be left

standing, doing the pee-pee dance, until thousands of people got off and on again.

Perhaps the conductor would be polite (see the next character – *qing*, or please) but, more often than not, he or she would be tired and very grumpy. If a person became desperate, the message was clear: *wu shi-yong* (don't use).

In fact, you didn't really want to use the washroom in the first place, but nature called and, in the past, the sight of the tracks below and the cold air on your butt was a welcome relief. Though train experiences have changed, there are still trips to the squatter to be braved. However, the message is the same: No Occupying While Stabling, or – Do not use while the train is stopped.



Movie of the week

Acrostic is not only a game Chinese scholars like to play. Roman Polanski revealed the key to a puzzle involving the UK Prime Minister using an acrostic. In the end, the first word of each chapter spells out the secret of the entire movie. Then, all the foreshadowing in previous plots come together in the conclusion.

Synopsis

A ghost writer gets the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to edit the memoirs of UK Prime Minister Adam Lang after the leader's former aide dies mysteriously. During his work, he discovers many clues related to his predecessor's death.

But just as he gets access to the prime minister, Lang is accused of committing a war crime. It appears that Lang's inauguration has subtle links to the CIA, and learning this secret puts the ghost writer in the same perilous situation as the former aide.



The Ghost Writer (2010)

Scene 1

(The ghost writer goes to discuss the details of his editing job with Lang's lawyers and publishers.)

Ghost Writer (GW): Roy. Who're you expecting to bomb you, Random House?

Roy: We're publishing Lang's memoirs. That's enough to make us a target, apparently.

GW: Thank you. How many have you seen?

Roy: Five. You're the last. I must be honest. I don't think you're the right man for this assignment.

GW: Then it's a good job it's not your decision, Roy.

Roy: John Maddox, chief executive of Rhinehart, New York.

GW: Sir.

Roy: Sidney Kroll, Mr. Lang's Washington attorney. Mr. Kroll. And Nick Ricardelli, I believe you know.

GW: All right, Rick.

John (J): All right, I gather from Rick you're aware of the situation? Perhaps you can enlighten us and tell us what exactly you're gonna bring to this project.

GW: Nothing. No, I'm not gonna pretend to be someone I'm not. You have my CV.

Roy: His last effort was the autobiography of a magician, *I Came, I Saved, I Conquered*.

Rick: Yeah, and it went straight to number one, so ...

GW: After you **turned it down** (1), Roy. Look, I don't read political memoirs. Who does? And I gather you've spent \$10 million on this book. How much of that are you gonna see back? Two? Three? It's bad news for your shareholders. And it's worse news for your client, Mr. Kroll. Adam Lang, he wants a place in history, not in the remainder tables.

Roy: Oh, please!

GW: It's because I know nothing about politics that I'll ask the questions that get right to the heart of who Adam Lang is. And that is what sells autobiographies. Heart.

Rick: Wow! That's nicely done.

Roy: What utter balls.

J: You think so?

Roy: John, of course. Adam Lang's a world historical figure. His autobiography is gonna be a world-publishing event.

J: Yeah, well, I got warehouses filled with world-publishing events waiting to be pulped. Sid?

Sidney (S): Adam is obviously still very upset by what happened to Mike



McAra. He was irreplaceable. Irreplaceable, and yet he has to be replaced. Adam can certainly appreciate the benefits of trying someone different. In the end, it's about chemistry. Do you work out, maybe?

GW: Not really.

S: That's a pity. Adam likes to work out.

Roy: Actually, I know a good writer on the *Guardian* who uses a gym.

Rick: OK, maybe we could just **run over** (2) the publishing schedule, yeah?

J: We need to **wrap this up** (3) in a month.

GW: A month?

J: Yes.

GW: You want the book in a month?

S: We already have a first draft.

John: Yeah, well, it needs a lot of work. That's why I like your resume here. You're fast, and you deliver.

Scene 2

(The ghost writer walks with Lang's wife Ruth on the beach.)

Ruth (R): You were my idea.

GW: I was?

R: You wrote Christy Costello's memoirs, didn't you?

GW: You read those?

R: We stayed at his house in Mustique, last winter. The book was beside the bed.

GW: I'm embarrassed.

R: No, why? It was brilliant, in a horrible sort of way. How you turned his ramblings into something vaguely coherent. I said to Adam, "Here's the guy to write your book, not Mike." God, I miss home. It's like being married to Napoleon on St. Helena.

GW: Why don't you go back to London?

R: I don't feel I can leave him alone. There's something not quite right with him at the moment.

GW: Amelia told me he was very upset at the death of Michael McAra.

R: Oh, she did, did she? Quite when Mrs. Bly became the expert on my husband's emotions, I'm not sure. Losing Mike was a blow, of course, but it's not just that. It's having to relive everything, year by year, for this bloody book. Oh, dear. You must be wondering what you've **let yourself in for** (4).

Scene 3

(The ghost writer is in the former aide's room.)

Amelia (A): Are you ill?

GW:

No, I'm aging. This place is Shangri-La in reverse.

A: I tried to call you several times last night. You didn't answer.

GW: I forgot to charge my mobile phone.

A: Really? And the hotel phone?

GW: I'm a heavy sleeper.

A: Well, you can do your heavy sleeping here from now on.

GW: Here?

A: We're **under siege** (5). You can't run the media gauntlet every day. Eventually, they'll discover who you are. And that would be horrid for you.

GW: So, this is where you put the granny.

A: No. This is where we put Mike McAra. We haven't had a chance to clear it yet. The sheets have been changed, though.

GW: Actually, I make it a rule never to stay in a client's house.

A: But now you can have constant access to the manuscript. Isn't that what you want? Besides, Sid Kroll will be arriving any minute. Why don't you settle in, and then come up and join us?

Vocabulary

1. **turn down:** reject

2. **run over:** to discuss or consider something again

3. **wrap up:** to get through and finish a task completely

4. **let somebody/yourself in for something:** to involve somebody/yourself in something that is likely to be unpleasant or difficult

5. **under siege:** being criticized all the time or put under pressure by problems and questions

(By Zhang Dongya)